VOLUME III

THE DIVINE COMEDY OF DANTE ALIGHIERI

PARADISO

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY

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of
Dante Alighieri

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Volume 3
PARADISO

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PREFACE

For the principles followed in the translation of the *Paradiso*, we refer the reader to the preface to our *Inferno* volume, and for the Italian text to the preface to our *Purgatorio* volume. As we write, a major advance in the textual criticism of the *Comedy* is taking place: the application to it of cladistic software (software developed to chart the relations among DNA strings, closely analogous with textual strings; see Shaw's *Monarchia* 2006 and her 2010 DVD *Commedia*). This approach has already demonstrated its usefulness in its critique of the unreliability of stemmas based on only small samples of variants and its demonstration of the superiority of Petrocchi's detailed analysis of all the variants in his chosen "vulgata" manuscripts; this software will eventually, as more and more manuscripts are compared by its means, lead to the possibility of a genuinely critical text. Petrocchi's text is still the most reliable guide, and we have again, in the main, followed it, including discussion of the passages where we have not done so in "Textual Variants," pp. 762–3.

In *Inter cantica* sections concluding the notes to the individual cantos of the *Purgatorio*, we provided detailed discussions of their allusions to the corresponding cantos (as well as to other cantos) of the *Inferno*, demonstrating, we hope, that such comparisons can be extremely illuminating: Dante's mode of composition involved holding the entire poem present to his awareness, with or without (more probably, with) detailed outlines. Such references, now involving two cantiche, become particularly dense and frequent in the *Paradiso*. For this reason, having offered the student a possible model for the exploration of the self-referentiality of the *Comedy* in the previous volume, we have here chosen a different method. The matter is necessarily treated to some extent in the body of the notes to each canto, but we have also included a number of Additional Notes discussing matters involving the entire poem, such as those on the figure of Beatrice, on the "threshold cantos," on Dante's Neoplatonism and his astrology, and on the *Paradiso* as the Alpha and Omega of the poem.

The procedures followed by the commentators in this volume differ from the two previous ones in another respect. Rather than the editor of the volume imposing his view of the appropriate uniformity among its parts (except in the signed Additional Notes), as previously, for this volume we have composed the notes individually, as indicated in the table of contents.

As before, translations of biblical passages are from the Douay version of the Latin Vulgate, except as noted, and, unless otherwise identified, nonbiblical translations are our own. And once again the four indexes have been prepared by R.M.D. And special thanks to Norman Rabkin for his invaluable help with the correction of the proofs.

Paris R.M.D.
September 2010

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The text of the *Paradiso* is reprinted (with qualifications, like the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*) from *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*, edited by Giorgio Petrocchi (sponsored by the Società Dantesca Italiana; copyright 1994, Casa Editrice Le Lettere), with the kind permission of both sponsor and publisher. Portions of earlier versions of several of the Additional Notes have appeared in *The Dante Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 2000); we are grateful for permission to utilize them.

Sixteen years have gone by since we embarked on this project. They have been endlessly fascinating and enjoyable, have immeasurably deepened our appreciation and admiration of our author, and have brought us many precious friendships and cherished memories.

Berkeley R.M.D.
Providence R.L.M.
May 2010

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ABBREVIATIONS

Ab urbe cond.	Livy, *Ab urbe condita*
Achill.	Statius, *Achilleid*
Acts	Acts of the Apostles
Aen.	Vergil, *Aeneid*
Apoc.	Apocalypse of saint John
CDH	Anselm, *Cur Deus homo*
CG	Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*
Chron.	Chronicles
Comm.	Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*
Confessions	Augustine, *Confessions*
Consol.	Boethius, *Philosophiae Consolatio*
Conv.	Dante, *Convivio*
Cor.	Saint Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians
De cael. hier.	Pseudo-Dionysius, *De caelesti hierarchia*
De civ. Dei	Augustine, *De civitate Dei*
De gen. et corr.	Aristotle, *De generatione et corruptione*
De nom. div.	Pseudo-Dionysius, *De nominibus divinis*
De serm. Dom.	Augustine, *De sermone Domini in monte*
Deut.	Deuteronomy
DTC	*Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*
DVE	Dante, *De vulgari eloquentia*
Eccles.	Ecclesiastes
Ecclus.	Ecclesiasticus
Ecl.	Vergil, *Eclogue(s)*
ED	*Enciclopedia dantesca*
Eng.	English
Ep.	Dante, *Epistle(s)*
Ep. mor.	Seneca, *Epistulae morales*
Eph.	Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians
Etym.	Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*
Ezek.	Ezekiel
Ex.	Exodus
Gal.	Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians
Gen.	Genesis
Geor.	Vergil, *Georgics*
Gr.	Greek
GSLI	*Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*
Heb.	Saint Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews
Inf.	*Inferno*
Is.	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
John	Gospel according to saint John (with preceding numeral, Epistle of saint John)
Jos.	Joshua
Jud.	Judges
Lam.	Lamentations of Jeremiah

Lat.	Latin
LDS	*Lectura Dantis Scaligera*
LDT	*Lectura Dantis Turicensis*
LDV	*Lectura Dantis Virginiana*
Legenda	Bonaventura, *Legenda maior*
Luke	Gospel according to saint Luke
Mal.	Malachi
Mark	Gospel according to saint Mark
Matt.	Gospel according to saint Matthew
Met.	Ovid, *Metamorphoses*
Mon.	Dante, *Monarchia*
NLD	*Nuove letture dantesche*
NT	New Testament
Num.	Numbers
Od.	Homer, *Odyssey*
OF	Old French
OT	Old Testament
Par.	*Paradiso*
Peter	Saint Peter's Epistles
Phar.	Lucan, *Pharsalia*
PL	Migne, *Patrologia . . . Latina*
Prov.	Proverbs
Ps.	Psalm(s)
Purg.	*Purgatorio*
Quaest.	Dante, *Quaestio de aqua et terra*
Raptus	Claudian, *De raptu Proserpinae*
Rationale	Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*
Rom.	Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans
RR	Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Roman de la rose*
Sat.	Macrobius, *Saturnalia*
Servius	*Servii grammatici . . . in Vergilii carmina commentarii*
SS	Cicero, *Somnium Scipionis*
ST	Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*
Theb.	Statius, *Thebaid*
Thess.	Saint Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians
Tim.	Saint Paul's Epistles to Timothy
Tob.	The Book of Tobias
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*
VN	Dante, *Vita nova*
Wisdom	Wisdom of Solomon

Authors' names appearing in the notes without dates (e.g., "Singleton") refer to commentaries, listed in the bibliography under "Editions and Commentaries on the *Divine Comedy*"; authors' names followed by dates (e.g., "Singleton 1966") refer to items listed in the bibliography under "Modern Works." Primary sources are for the most part cited by author or abbreviated title (as above); references are to editions listed under "Works by Dante" and "Primary Texts."

Psalms are cited by the numbers of the Latin Vulgate, used by Dante; they differ from the numbers of the Hebrew Bible: Vulgate Psalm 9 is Hebrew Psalms 9 and 10; Vulgate Psalms 10–112 correspond to Hebrew Psalms 11–113; Vulgate Psalm 113 is Hebrew Psalms 114–15; Vulgate Psalms 114–15 are Hebrew Psalm 116; Vulgate Psalms 116–45 are Hebrew Psalms 117–46; Vulgate Psalms 146 and 147 are Hebrew Psalm 147; for Psalms 1–8 and 148–50 the numbers coincide.

THE DIVINE COMEDY OF DANTE ALIGHIERI

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INTRODUCTION

The first two cantiche of the *Comedy* are, for the most part, intuitively direct in their modes of representation, however these modes may be qualified; but this last cantica is far from being direct. Even the problem of dating the *Paradiso* is different, for although there is a general consensus that Dante allowed the *Inferno* to circulate by about 1314, and that the *Purgatorio* was completed soon afterwards (mostly because its topical references do not extend beyond 1315; see the introduction to our *Purgatorio* volume), the dating of the *Paradiso* is quite uncertain. Its topical allusions give no help: the latest of them are to the death of Philip the Fair in 1314 and possibly to the battle of Montecatini in 1315 (see the notes to 6.106–8 and 19.120); these are much the same limits as in the *Purgatorio*. Complicating factors are the mentions of the *Paradiso* in other late works by Dante (*Eclogue* 2 ["Vidimus in nigris"], *Monarchia*, and Epistle 13; though they are late, the dating of all three is disputed. Both of Dante's eclogues were probably written during the last eighteen months of his life, and it is striking that the first of them mentions the publication of the *Paradiso* as belonging to an indefinite future (lines 48–49); in their literary context, the lines are a clear indication that the *Paradiso* was still unfinished. The only definite certainty seems to be that Dante must have completed the *Paradiso* before his death in September 1321. However, there is a growing body of evidence that Dante released the *Paradiso* in stages, perhaps in groups of cantos, perhaps as single cantos (Veglia 2003); as our knowledge grows it may be possible to refine these conclusions.

In our view, this difficulty of dating probably reflects the fact that Dante was constantly working on the *Paradiso*—thinking about it and planning it, perhaps, even actively drafting it—while he was drafting both *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, a view that also helps account for the intensive self-referentiality of the entire poem. For both of the first two parts of the *Comedy* include large numbers of references to the *Paradiso*, from the first announcement of the scope of the pilgrim's journey (*Inf.* 1.120–23), to the account of the three ladies in Heaven who sponsor it (*Inf.* 2.70–126), to the references to the meeting with

Beatrice and the constant references in the *Purgatorio* to the anxious yearning for Heaven of all the souls. The goal of the vision of God, the culmination of the *Paradiso*, is continually being referred to and is always assumed in the earlier cantiche, whether as what the damned have lost or as what the saved hope for. It is obvious that the planning of the *Comedy* included some kind of outline of the *Paradiso* from the beginning: the idea of the pilgrim's journey to Heaven and his vision of God must have been part of the original kernel that eventually grew into the poem. In a real sense, the *Paradiso* should be seen as the Alpha and Omega of the entire *Comedy* (see the general introduction in the *Inferno* volume, p. 20, and below, Additional Note 14).

The *Paradiso* takes the pilgrim—accompanied and instructed by Beatrice—on a vividly imagined ascent through the transparent celestial spheres of the medieval cosmos, meeting souls in each planet; in the heaven of the fixed stars, as the pilgrim draws closer and closer to the origin of all causality and reaches his own natal sign of Gemini, he is examined on the three theological virtues by the three chief Apostles (saints Peter, James, and John, founders of the Church) and meets Adam, the first father of all humankind. In the swiftness of the outermost celestial sphere, the undifferentiated *primum mobile* [first moveable], a vision of the nine orders of angels, rulers of the spheres, rises above material causality to its spiritual source, and the pilgrim's passage beyond space and time into the Empyrean takes place with overwhelmingly vivid imaginings. There he sees the places prepared for all the blessed of all time—most of them occupied, for not much time remains—and finally, encouraged by the spirit of saint Bernard of Clairvaux, the famous Cistercian mystic, he raises his eyes to the supreme vision of the godhead.

The *Paradiso* is paradoxically both the most medieval and the most modern of the three cantiche of Dante's masterpiece. It is the most medieval in setting forth—albeit with matchless imaginative sweep, clarity, and poetic eloquence—a philosophical-religious ascent based on a cosmology and scientific explanation of natural causality that have been left behind by hundreds of years of empirical scientific progress. The entire poetic enterprise of the *Paradiso* rests upon treating an already outdated version of the scientific and religious doctrines of Neoplatonic-Aristotelian Scholasticism (often hotly debated in the schools) as truths guaranteed by divine authority: by Beatrice, who is if only in part a kind of personification of divine revelation itself. But the *Paradiso* is also the most modern cantica of the *Comedy* in its

unprecedented intellectual and linguistic freedom. The thoroughness and imaginativeness of Dante's synthesis of an entire cosmos of thought and feeling was possible only because of his uncanny ability to detach himself from it.

But how is this journey to be read? Does it relate a mystical experience? Is it a form of science fiction? It is remarkable how many differing positions on this question have turned up over the course of the centuries. A convenient, really an unavoidable, point of departure presents itself: Dante's Epistle 13 (to Can Grande); its authenticity has been challenged, either as a whole or in part, by a number of scholars, but the weight of the evidence, much of which has only recently come to light, points toward its authenticity (see Hollander 1993, Azzetta 2003, Bellomo 2004).

The epistle seems to have been written in 1316 or 1317, on the occasion of Dante's leaving Verona, where for a number of years he and two of his sons had enjoyed the generous hospitality of Can Grande della Scala, the leader of the Italian Ghibellines, and where Dante seems to have reached the midpoint of the composition of the *Paradiso* (including the tribute to the Scaligeri in *Paradiso* 17; on the whole question, see Petrocchi 1984). Epistle 13, which must have accompanied a copy of the first canto of the cantica, dedicates the entire *Paradiso*, proleptically, to Can Grande. After the expression of deep friendship and admiration as the motive of the dedication, the epistle has two main parts: a general introduction to the *Comedy* as a whole (§§4–41), and a detailed exposition of its "prologue" (i.e., of Canto 1, lines 1–36, in §§42–88; this second part of the epistle is discussed in our notes on Canto 1), followed by a brief description (§§89–90) of the plan for the rest of the cantica.

In his general introduction, Dante explains in detail the traditional topics of the medieval *accessus* [lit. "approach"—introductory description of a work] as they apply to the *Comedy* as a whole and then to the *Paradiso*. These traditional topics are: the work's subject, agent, form, purpose, and branch of philosophy; in the *Comedy* the agent is the writer; the form is double: (1) *forma tractatus* [form of the treatise; what we would call its physical form]: the poem is divided into cantiche, cantos, and terzine; and (2) *forma tractandi* [what we would call its expository procedure]: this is, Dante says, "poetic, fictive, descriptive, digressive, transumptive [i.e., metaphorical], as well as defining, dividing, proving, disproving, and positing of examples." Finally, the purpose of the poem, Dante says, is to lead its readers

from a state of misery to one of happiness; and its philosophical category is ethics.

So far, in spite of Dante's medieval terminology, the meaning is clear. It is Dante's statement of the *subject* of the poem that has puzzled critics. He begins by stating that the poem is "polysemous" [having plural meanings]—in fact that it is allegorical. Dante implicitly refers to his discussion in Book 2 of the *Convivio*, where he distinguishes between theological and poetical allegoresis. Theological allegoresis (what has become known as the "allegory of theologians," though Dante does not use the expression) recognized the famous "four senses" of biblical allegory: the literal sense, relating the historical events (biblical accounts being taken, of course, to be true), and three allegorical senses giving the meanings behind the historical events. The chief difference between the two kinds of allegory consists in the fact that what is now called the "allegory of poets" rests on a fictitious literal sense and the figural allegory of theologians on a literally true *historical* sense, of which the events, not the words, carry the meaning. In the Epistle Dante exemplifies "allegorical" by the four senses of biblical exegesis, seeming to exclude from the poem, by omission, the "allegory of the poets" (the passage is quoted at some length in the Introduction to our *Purgatorio*, p. 12, as part of our discussion of Dante's figuralism). According to the Epistle, then, the subject of the entire poem, at the literal level, is "the state of souls after death," and, at the allegorical level, "man as by doing well or ill using his free will he justly merits punishment or reward" (§8; §11 specifies the double subject of the *Paradiso* in repetitious terms: "the state of blessed souls after death" and "man as by doing well using his free will he justly merits reward").

Two principal controversies have arisen because of Dante's definitions. First, a number of scholars who accepted the authenticity of the Epistle have interpreted its definition of the allegory to *exclude* the allegory of the poets (that is, allegory based on a fictitious literal sense); we will return to this question later. Second, many readers have been left dissatisfied by this description of the poem as coming from Dante: it seems to leave out so much. Bruno Nardi, perhaps the most distinguished *dantista* of the twentieth century, took the most extreme position of any: he went so far as to deny the authenticity of the exegetical portion of the Epistle (though not the introductory portion dedicating the poem to Can Grande), primarily because of his dissatisfaction with its definition of the literal sense of the poem, as well as with the claim that the poem is allegorical:

> In reality the literal sense of the poem as a whole is another; that is, the "fatale andare" of Dante, lost, through Hell and Purgatory, up to the ancient wood of the Earthly Paradise, guided by Virgil; and then the ascent through the celestial spheres, in the wake of saint Paul, guided by Beatrice. And in this journey and ascent Dante carries with him his "stato civile," with all the richness of his humanity, all his aspirations—personal, literary, political, moral, religious—so that the personal pronoun *I* resounds throughout the poem, from the second line to the third from the last…and is ever present, at every stage, in every episode, at every moment. This is the literal sense of the poem from beginning to end. (1966a)

Nardi certainly put his finger on a vital aspect of the poem, so important an aspect that it must have had for Dante a theoretical status. It is also one that immediately engages the fascinated attention of every reader: the first-person narrator, which the Epistle seems to leave out of account, as it seems intentionally blurring the distinction between the author and his character. Nardi was so strongly persuaded that Dante spoke as a divinely inspired prophet that he argued that the epistle traduces the poem's prophetic status that (to oversimplify) since Nardi essentially denied that the poem is allegorical, for him the exegetical part of the Epistle cannot be by Dante.

How can this issue be resolved? Let us take Dante's authorship as the most probable hypothesis and approach the Epistle carefully. It states plainly that the subject of the poem must be literally true (as an instance of the allegory of theologians), and, as Dante and his readers knew and modern readers know, this could not be true of the pilgrim's "literal" journey; therefore Nardi's identification of the literal subject must be mistaken. But if the Epistle is by Dante, why did he not refer in it to what Nardi calls the "literal sense"? In our view he does (see below), but he insists (throughout the Epistle, not merely in §§7–8) on the theological meanings of the poem because they really are its central subject: that is, the theological truths set forth in the poem are to be taken literally, are its true literal sense; but they are not the first-person narrative.

If we take the Epistle at face value, the literal subject of the *Paradiso* exclusively concerns the souls the pilgrim meets in the various planets, those he sees in the Empyrean, and perhaps the extent to which the pilgrim's own experiences in the Empyrean are represented as typical of the souls who arrive there after death. The allegorical sense—obviously,

God's justice as revealed in the state of the souls—includes the complexity of God's providential governing of the sublunar through the agency of the angelic movers and the astrological influence of the planets, as well as God's weighing of individual merits and his imparting of grace beyond merit. It is clear at once, then, that Beatrice's statements of moral distinctions and philosophical, cosmological, and theological truths are literal expositions of aspects of God's justice; in other words, they overlap what the Epistle defines as the allegorical sense. She explains the order of the universe and the role of secondary causes in Cantos 1 and 2; the structure of vows and their casuistry in Cantos 4 and 5; the rationale of the Atonement in Canto 7; the true place of souls and the metaphorics of the cantica in Canto 4. She ceremoniously mediates the pilgrim's examination in the three theological virtues and announces the certainty of his salvation in Cantos 23–26; directs his view downward to the smallness of earth in Cantos 22 and 27; and elucidates the vision of God and the angels, including the instantaneous creation of the universe in Cantos 28–29, as well as her denunciation of frivolous preaching.

Such passages clearly exemplify the second half of the description of the *forma tractandi*: they *define*, *divide*, *prove*, *disprove*, and *posit examples*. The same is true of the frequent (and, again, literally stated) commentaries provided by the souls of the blessed encountered on the journey (Piccarda and Justinian on beatitude; Carlo Martello on planetary influences versus heredity; Justinian on God's fostering of Rome; Aquinas and Bonaventura on the historical function of Francis of Assisi and Dominic of Calaruega; Aquinas on God's inscrutability and Solomon's wisdom; Solomon on the structure of beatitude and the glorified body; Cacciaguida on the decadence of Florence and the poet's mission; the heavenly eagle on God's absolute but inscrutable justice; Peter Damiani on the corruption of monasticism; saint Peter on the corruption of the papacy, and so forth).

Here we can distinguish between the *doctrinal content* of what Beatrice and the blessed souls say, which we can identify as intended to be accepted by the reader as literally true, and the means by which the pilgrim is represented as coming to understand these truths (the journey and the various discoursings of the *dramatis personae*), means that are obviously fictitious and/or metaphorical (for the figure of Beatrice, see Additional Note 1).

In this context Dante's description of what he calls the *forma tractandi* [mode of exposition] of the poem is particularly interesting; as

we have seen, in §9 the Epistle characterizes it as "poetic, fictive, descriptive, digressive, transumptive, as well as defining, dividing, proving, disproving, and positing of examples." If we take this list of procedures seriously, we find that the terms that head the list—*poetic*, *fictive*, *descriptive*, and *transumptive* (i.e., metaphorical)—actually provide for the full development of a fictitious, metaphorical narrative in the service of representing the subject, "the state of souls after death" (in this respect our position agrees substantially with Cecchini 1997). We may note in passing that Psalm 113 itself is not really a narrative of the Exodus; it is a rapturous hymn of rejoicing at the event. One should keep in mind that only the event itself is technically subject to theological allegoresis, not the poetic, fictive, and transumptive poem about it. Dante's very choice of this psalm as his example in the Epistle and in the *Convivio* may carry more meaning than critics have noticed.

Medieval exegetes acknowledged the frequency of biblical metaphor, exemplified by Beatrice in 4.40–45 (one notes that for them the literal sense of such an expression as "the *hand* of God" is not what today is called the "vehicle" of the metaphor (*hand*), but its "tenor": i.e., God's *influence* or *power*). The most extreme type of such metaphorical exegesis was that regularly practised on the Canticle of Canticles: although modern readers take the literal sense of these marriage songs as referring to earthly lovers and the religious references as an allegorical sense, the monastic exegetes, such as saint Bernard of Clairvaux (Bernard of Clairvaux 1998, 1.2–4), explicitly excluded such a view; for them the book was metaphorical but not allegorical; it was an elaborate tissue of metaphors whose literal sense (i.e., whose tenor) referred *exclusively* to the love between the soul (or the Church, or the Virgin Mary) and God. For Bernard, to see these metaphors in any way as references to human sexuality would be blasphemous, and for this reason monastic novices were not allowed to read the Canticle of Canticles until they were fully trained in exegesis (such strict severity is of course foreign to the metaphorics of secular lyric in both Latin and the vernacular). Dante was aware of all these traditions and expected his readers to be familiar with them as well, but he utilized them freely and was the prisoner of none of them.

The pilgrim's journey is to be thought of, then, as a metaphorical fiction (*poeticus*, *fictivus*, *transumptivus*, narrated by the poet-narrator); it is a system of metaphors for the process by which a living man, on earth, comes to understand the nature of the cosmos and the state of souls

after death. For instance, the repeated description of instantaneous translation from one planet to the next (as in *Par.* 5.91–93, 8.14–15, 10.28–36) is, as the last passage suggests, a spatial metaphor for instantaneous intellectual understanding (see also our note on 2.25–36). All this amounts to saying that the fictitious literal narrrative (what Nardi was describing), with its metaphorical senses, which Nardi denied, is, *pace* Nardi, an instance of the "allegory of the poets," as announced in the Epistle's term *fictivus*. From this point of view the poem can be seen as a combination of the allegory of the poets as described in the *Convivio* (a metaphorical narrative sense), serving an allegory of the theologians (a true ultimate literal or historical/theological sense, all metaphors stripped away). The matter becomes urgent in the *Paradiso*, for the idea that Dante thought that his account of spatial ascent up through the heavenly spheres to the Empyrean was literally true is not only wildly mistaken, it distracts attention from the depth and complexity of Dante's achievement.

As we pointed out in our introduction to the *Purgatorio* (p. 12), it is erroneous to assert, as Singleton repeatedly did, that only figural allegory, in which the literal sense was historically true, was capable of possessing allegorical (in the narrow sense), tropological, and anagogical meanings. It was clearly recognized in the Middle Ages that Christ's parables, though fictitious, had allegorical meanings (Wailes 1987). Nor should one forget that Dante is a master at evading rigid, restrictive categories. The angelic boat in *Purgatorio* 2, in which the souls sing Dante's exemplary Psalm 113, is a good example: it foregrounds the figuralism of the poem, but it is transparently a poetic invention included in the fictitious narrative, and it thus emphasizes the poet's freedom to interweave all the various modes of signification at his disposal.

It may be worthwhile to devote a few pages to the question of how closely the double subject announced in the Epistle to Can Grande is related to the entire thematic sweep of the *Paradiso*. The astrological theme is a good point of departure. That Dante treats the souls of the blessed according to the planets where the pilgrim meets them is no mere convenient classifying device: in each of the seven planets, he encounters souls whose lives have typified the nature of the planet's influence; they are, according to the virtually universal medieval belief, the "children" of their respective planets. We need not go into individual cases here; it will suffice to mention the obvious facts that the preachers we meet in the sun were equipped for their calling—that

of illuminating the faithful—by the influence of their planet (always remembering that the intellect itself is directly infused by God), and that the Crusaders were physically and temperamentally equipped to fight for the faith by their planet, Mars, and so forth (for further discussion, see Additional Note 14). This theme is an integral part of the theme of God's justice as revealed in the state of the blessed. Dante sets forth an elaborate theory of the interaction of astrological influences with the souls' freedom of choice, on which their fate depends (a theme broached with a major statement by Marco Lombardo in *Purgatorio* 16). The astrological theme explores the extent to which one is not responsible for one's basic gifts and inclinations; one's place in the afterlife depends upon the degree to which one becomes self-directed under God's guidance—the extent to which one achieves true freedom of action and fulfills one's higher potential. Thus the astrological theme also confronts the limits on human freedom and the determining part played by God's grace and his inscrutable choosing of individuals for special roles and special status.

Even more, Dante has Charles Martel, in *Paradiso* 8, explain that the astrological influences on the embryo in the womb are ordained by God in order to overrule heredity, to prevent children from being mere copies of their parents, because otherwise the diversity of talents necessary to the division of labor in organized society would not be fully realized. In other words, the fundamental structure of the cosmos is designed to serve the needs of human society, which in turn fosters, or should foster, the full development of each individual (an important theme also in the *Monarchia*).

The centrality of the astrological theme (only slowly is its omnipresence and fundamental importance being recognized by Dante scholars) leads inescapably to—and is in fact virtually coterminous with—the cosmological theme, whose elaborate statement begins in the very first canto, where another major theme emerges, closely related to those mentioned so far: the knowledge of God that is attained through contemplation of the universe, his creation. How did God create the universe, and why? How does he maintain relation with it? What is the nature of the causes that govern the universe? Thus the theme of "the state of souls after death," explored fully, leads to the theology of Creation and to theodicy (the theory of God's justice in his dealings with man). And, of course, part of the joy of the blessed, who see all things in God, is that they more fully contemplate the universe and all history as revealing him. At this level the evolution

of the pilgrim intersects the theme of the state of the souls of the blessed. For, as the pilgrim rises higher and higher through the spheres, he more and more becomes an example of experiences all the blessed pass through, and this is especially perceptible in the last cantos, those that take place in the *primum mobile* and Empyrean: the welcoming of the soul by the Church Triumphant (cf. *Conv*. 4.28.5), the entrance into the transfigured vision of Glory (Beatrice points out in 30.52–54 that all the blessed encounter these "shadowy prefaces," as lines 76–78 call them), the contemplation of all the other blessed souls in their orders and degrees, and above all, the direct vision of God. What the pilgrim experiences is an anticipation of the experience the blessed have already enjoyed to an even fuller extent. But the literal sense of the pilgrim's narrative is fictitious and allegorical.

Thus the universe as radiating from God; his power reflected by the angels governing the spheres; astrological influences as the instruments of God's Providence, with the corresponding limitations on and assertion of difficult human freedom; the contemplation of God in his creation as essential to beatitude; the deeper and deeper understanding of causality and history; the transfiguration of all modes of experience in the experience of the blessed—all these interrelated themes are implied in the extraordinarily condensed statement of the double subject of the poem in the Epistle to Can Grande. Once the poem and the epistle are juxtaposed in this way, the terseness of the epistle takes on quite a different and very suggestive aspect: the themes of the poem are expansions of what the Epistle tersely sets forth, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that the early phases of Dante's planning of the poem as a whole must have involved representations and formulae of a comparable terseness, of which the epistle may well retain traces.

It is often said that the uniqueness of the *Paradiso* lies in its imaginative undertaking to express visions that transcend mere human experience. Such a view is potentially very misleading. It is true that the *Paradiso* repeatedly appeals to the so-called "inexpressibility topos" to describe the intense *feelings* the intellectual ascent and the associated increasing beauty of Beatrice instill in the pilgrim. But there is no vagueness or superhuman transcendence in the doctrinal content of the poem, in what the pilgrim learns about the nature of the cosmos or about God and his justice; even the grandiose, highly imaginative light shows in the sun and the upper planets are clearly and rationally devised. And the intellectual content of the final imagined vision of

God is dictated by Dante's rational theological concepts; such matters as the metaphysical nature of the cosmos, the relation of the Persons of the Trinity, the presence of the incarnate Christ, and the principle of the hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ are traditional, plainly designated, and founded in rational theology, although the actual *content* of these illuminations, the grasp of their truth, is said to transcend the pilgrim's memory. In other words, accepting a mainly orthodox, Neoplatonic-Aristotelian, Trinitarian theology, Dante imagines an intellectual ascent that directly experiences itas true and as productive of immeasurable joy.

We argue, then, that the Epistle to Can Grande accounts for much more of the poem than at first sight appears. But it is true that, except for the highly condensed description of the *forma tractandi*, the epistle has little to say about the narrator, whose journey Nardi thought the literal sense of the poem. It should be clear by now that in our view there is nothing of actual "mystical" experience in the *Paradiso*. Every doctrine and virtually every imagined experience it represents can be shown to derive from Dante's meditation on his voluminous reading, and this is nowhere more evident than in his description of his imagined direct vision of God. Like the rest of the *Comedy*, the *Paradiso* is a literary creation, impassioned and matchlessly imaginative, but *linguistic*, not *supralinguistic*. In every line, the reader feels Dante's firm, purposive artistic planning and control and his conscious linguistic mastery.

Indeed, the *Paradiso* constitutes one of the most remarkable struggles with the limits of language in world literature, constantly pushing against them in the interest of greater and greater exaltation. A considerable arsenal of means is brought into play, of which we attempt to take account in our commentary: daring metaphors; neologisms (mostly verbs); periphrases; Grecisms, Hebraisms, and Latinisms (mostly from the Latin liturgy and from scholastic philosophical vocabulary); mythological allusions; elaborate and difficult rhetorical figures such as *hysteron proteron*, *annominatio*, *catachresis*, *gradatio*; elaborate syntactical inversions and other patterns; special effects with rhyme; systematic, recurrent but extremely varied exploitation of basic metaphors involving light and mirrors, archery, the book, astronomical and meteorological phenomena, agriculture (especially the idea of harvest), circles, spheres, and wheels—all held together by his unsurpassed craftmanship and his extremely varied use of the inexpressibility topos.

Like the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, however, this third cantica of the *Comedy* lives up to the comedic stylistic norm of including all levels of style (cf. the Epistle to Can Grande, §§30–32), not merely the high style we have catalogued in the foregoing paragraph: from familiar, colloquial patterns of speech to the scornful, quasi-scatological diatribes against corrupt prelates and monks of saint Peter, Peter Damiani, and others, which continually measure the decadence and corruption of life on earth against the purity of heavenly standards, achieving a highly original inclusiveness and balance. Nothing remotely resembling it will appear until Joyce.

The theme of the status of the pilgrim's body in his journey through the heavens, which has been rather hastily oversimplified by a number of recent commentators (Sapegno, Picone in *LDT* 3, Chiavacci Leonardi), provides a good example of the care with which Dante treats the fictitiousness of his narrative. In *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, the presence of the pilgrim's body is insisted on in a variety of ways (see especially *Inf.* 1.28–30, 5.142, 12.29–30 and 80–96; *Purg.* 3.16–45, 9.10–42, 19.1–39, 27.14–17 and 91–114: all these cases involve weight, shadow, and sleep, associated with the element earth, along with the detailed and emphatic *Purg.* 26.58–60). In the *Paradiso*, however, once we leave the earth, there is a striking difference: the closest approaches to a bodily reference, as opposed to visual or auditory representations, occur in 3.6 and 25.34, where the pilgrim "raised [his] head to speak," and in 30.55–96, where the pilgrim bathes "the eaves of [his] eyes" in the river of light. Like the many other references to speech and to the two "highest" senses, sight and hearing, these passages avoid naming any part of the body other than the head, except for 22.128–29: "see how much world I have already placed under your feet" ["vedi quanto mondo / sotto i piedi già esser ti fei"] (on the background of this passage, see our notes). Although such a passage as 27.64–65, "and you, my son, . . . because of your mortal weight will go back down again" (spoken by saint Peter), may seem to imply the literal presence of the pilgrim's body in the heavens, its real import is the continuing pull of the body still on earth: all visionary experience is limited by the earthy body (cf. below, on 32.139–41, and our notes). Indeed, the references to the pilgrim's body are carefully problematized by Dante (see the notes on 3.10–24), and he treats the dividing line between allegory and metaphor with great fluidity and freedom.

This is because the entire journey through the heavens in Dante's conception takes place in the pilgrim's head, that is, in his imagination.

After the pilgrim and Beatrice have met the souls of inconstant nuns in the moon, Beatrice explains that the souls were not "really" in the moon; that they were mere staged appearances, their "actual" location being the Empyrean (4.28–60). But when we arrive beyond place and time in the Empyrean itself (where, the pilgrim is told, he will see saint Benedict of Nursia's face openly—22.58–63), what do we find? The pilgrim will not see the souls as they are, but as they *will be* after the Last Judgment (30.43–45). In other words, the souls are *shown* to the pilgrim's imagination. As saint John says (25.122–29), only Christ and the Virgin are in Heaven in the body, but the text makes no distinction between the Virgin's bodily appearance and that of all the other souls, and the final vision does not make the "painting" of "our effigy" (33.131) seem like an actual human body.

These seeming contradictions have all been provided for by Beatrice's initial explanation (4.40–42), a major key to the representations of the poem: "It is necessary to speak thus [i.e., with images] to your [human] understanding, for it takes from sense perception alone what later it makes worthy of intellection." This statement, like saint John's in 25.122–29, applies *a fortiori* to the pilgrim himself: he *imagines* his voyage to the other world. And as Aristotle had observed (*De anima* 3), fantasies of sense perception, images, are always present in even the most abstract human thought. The poem itself provides a theory of imaginative "vision" on the terrace of anger in *Purg*. 15.85–114 and 17.19–45, where the pilgrim has two series of "ecstatic visions" (explicitly associated in the latter passage with sleep and dream):

> O imaginativa, che ne rube
> talvolta sì di fuor ch'om non s'accorge
> perché dintorno suonin mille tube,
> chi move te, se 'l senso non ti porge?
> moveti lume che nel ciel s'informa,
> per sé o per voler che giù lo scorge.
> (*Purg*. 17.13–18)

> [O imagination, that sometimes so steal us from the world outside that we do not hear though a thousand trumpets sound around us,
> who moves you, if sense offers you nothing? A light moves you that is formed in the heavens, by itself or by a will that guides it downward.]

To an observer, the visionary taken up so completely by the vision will seem asleep, as Virgil observes of the pilgrim in *Purg.* 15.121–23. The chief example in the poem, other than the pilgrim himself, is saint John the Evangelist, who is seen in the procession in the Earthly Paradise as "un vecchio solo / venir dormendo, con la faccia arguta" [an old man walking alone, asleep, with alert face] (*Purg.* 29.142–45). The commentary tradition on the Apocalypse allowed for the possibility of the saint's vision taking place during sleep (manuscript illuminations often represented him asleep, see Schiller 1991, vol. 5, part 2, plates 10, 12, 20, 23, 25, 43, 46, 67, 68; cf. Emmerson and McGinn 1992; Grosjean, Christe, and James 1981).

As the pilgrim begins his ascent, the narrating poet exclaims: "If I was solely that part of me which you created last [i.e., only the soul; cf. *Purg.* 25.67–75], O Love who govern the heavens, you know" (1.73–75); in other words, he claims not to know. Dante's model here is saint Paul's protestation that he does not know whether he was rapt to the third heaven in the body or not, God knows (2 Cor. 5.2: "sive in corpore nescio, sive extra corpore nescio, Deus scit"). This statement of the narrator should be taken as a characterization of the intensity of the pilgrim's imaginings; it is deeply misleading to suppose that Dante would claim, even in his fiction, a status superior to saint Paul's. "If I was a body" in 2.36–39 is equivalent: the reader is being challenged to exercise his wit as well as his imagination (see below, p. 17), and Beatrice's long explanation of the pilgrim's motion in Canto 1 (lines 97–141), with its analogy with lightning, is meaningful only insofar as it is understood to refer to the pilgrim's mind and imagination: the pilgrim's physical body, being predominantly composed of the elements water and earth, is only partly fire; his spirit is fire (metaphorically), however, especially if illuminated by the Holy Spirit. One should consider carefully Dante's statement of the nature of *trasumanar*:

> Nel suo aspetto tal *dentro* mi fei
> qual si fé Glauco nel gustar de l'erba
> che 'l fe consorto in mar de li altri dèi.
> (1.67–69)
>
> [Gazing at her I became *within* what Glaucus
> became tasting the herb that made him a consort of the other gods in the sea.] (Italics added.)

The pilgrim's experience in the *Paradiso* is inward: as Benvenuto glosses, "*dentro*, that is in his intellect, since his body is not changed."

Thus the poem qualifies its own representations, and we know that alert readers among the poet's contemporaries were able to put his hints together. Benvenuto da Imola grasped Dante's meaning clearly: the pilgrim does not ascend to the "essential paradise" (the Empyrean itself), but to its intellectual, spiritual, and moral significance: "Our poet, though on earth, was in Heaven in his contemplation" (Benvenuto da Imola 1887, 4:318–19), or, as we would say, in his mind and imagination. And when the reader reflects on the way the *Paradiso* has indicated the subtlety of its *forma tractandi*, he will grasp the essential point that it has been equipping us to rethink the earlier parts of the poem as well. Dante expects careful reading from his public, and the indirection of his metaphorical narrative is no doubt one of the principal interpretive traps he warns against in the address to his readers in 2.1–18 (for Dante's setting of interpretive traps, see Durling 2001a and 2003).

Almost at the end of the poem, Dante puts in the mouth of his last guide, saint Bernard of Clairvaux, a reason for abbreviating the list of the blessed presented to the pilgrim's view: "But because the time is fleeting that holds you asleep ["il tempo fugge che t'assonna"], here we will make an end, like a good tailor who makes the garment according to the cloth he has; and we will direct our eyes to the first Love" (32.139–42). It is noteworthy not only that the saint appeals to the activity of an artisan for the limits of the length of the poem (the reference is to the bounds established by the poet's craftsmanship; cf. the similar passage in *Purg.* 33.136–41), but also that he clearly states that the pilgrim is held asleep.

Saint Bernard's words in fact show that the entire poem can be understood under the category of dream, an idea that is introduced, albeit understatedly, at the beginning of the *Inferno*, when the pilgrim comes to himself after having been "full of sleep" (*Inf.* 1.1–12): from the *Romance of the Rose* onward, the genre of dream-vision regularly begins the dream with an awakening; it may be referred to again in the heaven of Mars, when Dante has his ancestor Cacciaguida say, "make manifest all your vision" (17.128). Prophetic dreams figure largely in the *Purgatorio* (Cantos 9, 19, and 27), and we are reminded of the idea of dream-vision at the end of the *Purgatorio* (30.133–35) and in the very last canto of the poem, where the pilgrim is explicitly compared to a dreamer:

Qual è colüi che sognando vede, 58
che dopo 'l sogno la passione impressa
rimane, e l'altro a la mente non riede:
cotal son io, ché quasi tutta cessa 61
mia visïone, e ancor mi distilla
nel core il dolce che nacque da essa.

[As is one who sees in dream, 58
and after the dream the passion impressed
remains, but the rest does not return to the mind:
so am I, for almost all my vision 61
has ceased, but still there trickles
into my heart the sweetness born of it.]

In fact Benvenuto's comment on this passage is: "And here note how this elaborate simile of the dreamer in its literal significance declares the intention of the author in this final canto, that he had his entire vision in a dream, as he testified in the first canto of the entire work."

Although, as we have said, Dante is a past master at evading restrictive categories (including that of dream), the affinities of the *Comedy* with dream-vision are significant. A principal advantage of dream-vision as a literary genre was that it allowed for an extremely flexible mixture of realistic representation, suspension of physical law, and allegorical techniques, all with the acknowledged presence of the author's conscious meditation and verbal craftmanship. In many parts of the poem, such as the rapid progress of the pilgrim through Purgatory, the category of dream helps lessen the scandalous unreality; and the question of two bodies occupying the same space—2.37–39—once it is raised, is probably best explained as referring to dream. The affinities occurred to contemporaries: a number of the earliest illuminations of *Inferno* 1 represent—often in the same frame—both the poet asleep and his dream-imago confronting the beasts in the dark wood, a style that recalls the iconography of the Apocalypse (see Brieger, Meiss, and Singleton 1969, plates 6b, 7, II; Battaglia Ricci 1996).

As is well known, Dante studied Vergil's *Aeneid* with great care. In this connection it would not have escaped him that Vergil both represents Aeneas's visit to the Other World as taking place in the body (in *Aen.* 6.413–14 the hero's great weight makes Charon's bark sink in the water, a passage echoed by Dante in *Inf.* 8.26–27) and also suggests that the visit is to be thought of as dream or imagined vision, for it is through the ivory gate of false dreams that Aeneas and the

Sibyl return to the upper world (6.897–98). When questioning his worthiness for the journey, the pilgrim mentions that Aeneas "ad immortale secolo andò, e fu sensibilmente" [went to the immortal realm and was there with his senses] (*Inf.* 2.14–15); the term "sensibilmente" may well mean that Aeneas was in the other world not "in the body" but "through imaginary sense experience." Indeed, Dante seems to attribute to the *Aeneid* his own representational code as set forth in *Paradiso* 4. Like Vergil, Dante does not insist on the dream-vision possibility, but he plainly advances it for the benefit of his more observant readers (for the sixteenth-century controversy over the *Comedy* as dream, see Weinberg 1961 and Hathaway 1962).

The *Paradiso*, then, relates the imaginative and intellectual journey of progressively higher insight into the complex of problems represented in the epistle's "double subject": the state of the blessed and its basis in God's justice. This "forma tractandi" is extremely flexible, as befits the combination of the two types of allegory: everything is represented as it appears to the poet's imagination; intellectual understanding is treated as inseparable from sensory imaginings. The figure of Beatrice, whose growing beauty lifts the pilgrim higher and higher through the heavens, in an instantaneous flash of understanding at each successive level, also expresses the joy every man (for the pilgrim is also an Everyman) can attain, with God's grace, in his journey toward God. Read in this way, the *Paradiso* is an enduring monument to an extraordinary moment in European cultural and religious history and an evermore compelling meditation on the power of the poetic imagination.

Many dimensions of the *Paradiso* are not mentioned here because of limitations of space. Perhaps the most important is the question of the degree to which Dante's stirring expression of religious faith in God's justice gives expression to his experience of the incomprehensible injustices, as he saw them, of actual human life. Confronted by widespread venality and corruption, by the power-hungry dynastic politics of the emerging nation-state wearing the mask of religious orthodoxy and zeal, by virtually universal hypocrisy and fraud in the service of greed and materialism, especially in the cynical papacy, not to speak of the thwarting of his hopes for the restoration of the Holy Roman Empire by the resistance of the popes and the death of Henry of Luxembourg, God's anointed, Dante often seems unable to imagine a future of true christianity and justice except in terms of the direct intervention of God, of which he hoped his great poem was the beginning.

Suggested Introductory Readings on the *Paradiso*

(See also pp. 23–24 in our *Inferno*.)

Carroll, John S. 1971. *In Patria: An Exposition of Dante's* Paradiso. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat.

McMahon, Robert. 2006. *Understanding the Medieval Meditative Ascent: Augustine, Anselm, Boethius, and Dante*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press.

Rorem, Paul 1993. *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence*. New York: Oxford University Press.

PARADISO

CANTO 1

La gloria di Colui che tutto move
per l'universo penetra e risplende
in una parte più e meno altrove.
Nel ciel che più de la sua luce prende
fu' io, e vidi cose che ridire
né sa né può chi di là sù discende,
perché appressando sé al suo disire
nostro intelletto si profonda tanto
che dietro la memoria non può ire.
Veramente quant' io del regno santo
ne la mia mente potei far tesoro,
sarà ora materia del mio canto.
O buono Appollo, a l'ultimo lavoro
fammi del tuo valor sì fatto vaso
come dimandi a dar l'amato alloro.
Infino a qui l'un giogo di Parnaso
assai mi fu, ma or con amendue
m'è uopo intrar ne l'aringo rimaso:
entra nel petto mio, e spira tue
sì come quando Marsïa traesti
de la vagina de le membra sue.
O divina virtù, se mi ti presti
tanto che l'ombra del beato regno
segnata nel mio capo io manifesti,
vedra'mi al piè del tuo diletto legno
venire e coronarmi de le foglie
che la materia e tu mi farai degno.
Sì rade volte, padre, se ne coglie
per trïunfare o cesare o poeta—
colpa e vergogna de l'umane voglie—

CANTO 1

Proposition and invocation—noon in the Earthly Paradise—view of the sun—ascent—the sphere of fire—the order of the universe and the principle of motion

The glory of Him who moves all things
penetrates through the universe and shines
forth in one place more and less elsewhere.
In the heaven that receives most of his light
have I been, and I have seen things that
one who comes down from there cannot
remember and cannot utter,
for as it draws near to its desire, our intellect goes
so deep that the memory cannot follow it.
Nevertheless, as much of the holy kingdom
as I was able to treasure up in my mind will
now become the matter of my song.
O good Apollo, for this last labor make me
such a vessel of your power as you require to
bestow the beloved laurel.
Until now one peak of Parnassus has been
enough for me, but now with both of them
I must enter upon what of the field remains:
come into my breast and breathe there, as when you
drew Marsyas forth from the sheath of his members.
O divine power, if you lend so much of yourself to
me that I may make manifest the shadow of the blessed
kingdom that is stamped within my head,
you will see me come to the foot of your beloved
tree, and crown myself with the leaves of which the
subject and you will make me worthy.
So seldom, Father, are they gathered for
the triumph of emperor or poet—such is the
guilt and shame of human desires—

che parturir letizia in su la lieta
delfica deïtà dovria la fronda
peneia, quando alcun di sé asseta.
Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda:
forse di retro a me con miglior voci
si pregherà perché Cirra risponda.
Surge ai mortali per diverse foci
la lucerna del mondo, ma da quella
che quattro cerchi giugne con tre croci
con miglior corso e con migliore stella
esce congiunta, e la mondana cera
più a suo modo tempera e suggella.
Fatto avea di là mane e di qua sera
tal foce quasi, e tutto era là bianco
quello emisperio, e l'altra parte nera,
quando Beatrice in sul sinistro fianco
vidi rivolta e riguardar nel sole:
aquila sì non li s'affisse unquanco.
E sì come secondo raggio suole
uscir del primo e risalire in suso,
pur come pellegrin che tornar vuole:
così de l'atto suo, per li occhi infuso
ne l'imagine mia, il mio si fece,
e fissi li occhi al sole oltre nostr' uso.
Molto è licito là che qui non lece
a le nostre virtù, mercé del loco,
fatto per proprio de l'umana spece.
Io nol soffersi molto, né sì poco
ch'io nol vedessi sfavillar dintorno
com' ferro che bogliente esce del foco,
e di sùbito parve giorno a giorno
essere aggiunto, come quei che puote
avesse il ciel d'un altro sole addorno.
Beatrice tutta ne l'etterne rote
fissa con li occhi stava, e io in lei
le luci fissi, di là sù rimote.
Nel suo aspetto tal dentro mi fei
qual si fé Glauco nel gustar de l'erba
che 'l fé consorto in mar de li altri dèi.

that the Peneian leaf should give birth to
gladness in the happy Delphic deity, when it
makes any one thirst for it.
A tiny spark can result in a great flame:
perhaps, following after me, with better
voices, others will pray so that Cyrrha will reply.
The lantern of the world rises to mortals
through divers outlets, but from the one that
joins four circles with three crosses
it comes forth with better course and joined
to better stars, and it tempers and seals the
waxy world more to its manner.
Such an outlet, or one near it, had made
morning there, and evening here, and there
the hemisphere was all white, and this one black,
when I saw Beatrice turned to her left and
looking into the sun: eagle never fixed its
sight there so.
And as a second ray will spring forth from a
first, mounting upward like a pilgrim that
wishes to return home:
so my act patterned itself on hers, infused
through my eyes into my imagination, and
I fixed my eyes on the sun beyond our wont.
Much is permitted there that is not permitted
to our faculties here, thanks to the
place, created to be the home of the human race.
I did not endure it long, nor yet so little that
I did not see it emitting sparks all around, like
iron come forth boiling from the fire,
and suddenly day seemed to be added to
day, as if the Almighty had adorned the sky
with another sun.
Beatrice was all fixed on the eternal wheels
with her eyes, and I fixed my eyes on her,
removing them from the heights.
Gazing at her I became within what
Glaucus became tasting the herb that made
him a consort of the other gods in the sea.

Trasumanar significar *per verba* 70
non si poria; però l'essemplo basti
a cui esperïenza grazia serba.
S' i' era sol di me quel che creasti 73
novellamente, Amor che 'l cielo governi,
tu 'l sai, che col tuo lume mi levasti.
Quando la rota che tu sempiterni, 76
desiderato, a sé mi fece atteso
con l'armonia che temperi e discerni,
parvemi tanto allor del cielo acceso 79
de la fiamma del sol, che pioggia o fiume
lago non fece alcun tanto disteso.
La novità del suono e 'l grande lume 82
di lor cagion m'accesero un disio
mai non sentito di cotanto acume.
Ond' ella, che vedea me sì com' io, 85
a quïetarmi l'animo commosso,
pria ch'io a dimandar, la bocca aprio
e cominciò: "Tu stesso ti fai grosso 88
col falso imaginar, sì che non vedi
ciò che vedresti se l'avessi scosso.
Tu non se' in terra, sì come tu credi, 91
ma folgore, fuggendo il proprio sito,
non corse come tu ch'ad esso riedi."
S' io fui del primo dubbio disvestito 94
per le sorrise parolette brevi,
dentro ad un nuovo più fu' inretito,
e dissi: "Già contento *requïevi* 97
di grande ammirazion, ma ora ammiro
com' io trascenda questi corpi levi."
Ond' ella, appresso d'un pio sospiro, 100
li occhi drizzò ver' me con quel sembiante
che madre fa sovra figlio deliro,
e cominciò: "Le cose tutte quante 103
hanno ordine tra loro, e questo è forma
che l'universo a Dio fa simigliante.
Qui veggion l'alte creature l'orma 106
de l'etterno valore, il qual è fine
al quale è fatta la toccata norma.

To signify transhumanizing *per verba* is
impossible; therefore let the comparison
suffice for those to whom grace reserves the experience.
If I was solely that part of me which you
created last, O Love who govern the heavens,
you know, for you raised me up with your light.
When the wheeling that you make sempiternal, by
being desired, drew my attention with the harmony
that you temper and distinguish,
so much of the sky seemed to be on fire
with the flame of the sun then, that rain or
river never made so extended a lake.
The wonder of the sound and the great
light kindled a desire in me to know their
cause, never before felt with such sharpness.
Therefore she, who saw me as I do myself,
in order to quiet my laboring spirit, before I
could ask opened her lips
and began: "You are making yourself swell
with false imagining, so that you do not see
what shaking it off would show.
You are not on earth as you believe, but
lightning, fleeing its proper place, never sped
so fast as you, going back to yours."
If I was divested of my first doubt by her
smiling brief words, I was tangled even more
in a new one,
and I said: "Satisfied just now, *requïevi*
from great wonder, but now I marvel how I
can rise up through these light bodies."
Wherefore she, after a pitying sigh,
directed her eyes at me with the expression
that a mother has over a delirious child,
and began: "All things whatsoever have
order among themselves, and this is a form
that makes the universe resemble God.
Here the high creatures see the footprint of
the eternal Worth, the end to which is created
the order just touched upon.

Ne l'ordine che dico sono accline
tutte nature per diverse sorti,
più al principio loro e men vicine;
onde si muovono a diversi porti
per lo gran mar de l'essere, e ciascuna
con istinto a lei dato che la porti.
Questi ne porta il foco inver' la luna,
questi ne' cor mortali è permotore,
questi la terra in sé stringe e aduna;
né pur le creature che son fore
d'intelligenza quest' arco saetta,
ma quelle c'hanno intelletto e amore.
La provedenza che cotanto assetta
del suo lume fa 'l ciel sempre quïeto
nel qual si volge quel c'ha maggior fretta;
e ora lì, come a sito decreto,
cen porta la virtù di quella corda
che ciò che scocca drizza in segno lieto.
Vero è che, come forma non s'accorda
molte fiate a l'intenzion de l'arte,
perch' a risponder la materia è sorda,
così da questo corso si diparte
talor la creatura ch'ha podere
di piegar, sì pinta, in altra parte;
e sì come veder si può cadere
foco di nube, sì l'impeto primo
l'atterra torto da falso piacere.
Non dei più ammirar, se bene stimo,
lo tuo salir, se non come d'un rivo
se d'alto monte scende giuso ad imo.
Maraviglia sarebbe in te se, privo
d'impedimento, giù ti fossi assiso,
com' a terra quïete in foco vivo."
Quinci rivolse inver' lo cielo il viso.

In the order of which I speak, all natures
incline in their divers lots, closer to their origin
or more distant from it;
thus they move toward different ports over
the great sea of being, each with an instinct
given it to carry it.
This carries fire on up toward the moon,
this is the driving force in mortal hearts, this
compresses and unites the earth;
nor does this bow propel only the creatures
deprived of intelligence, but also those that
have intelligence and love.
The Providence that sets all this in order
ever stills with its light the heaven where that
other revolves that has the greatest haste;
and now thither, as to a decreed goal, we are
carried by the power of that bowstring which
aims toward a happy target all that it looses.
It is true that, just as form often does not
accord with the intention of art, because the
material is deaf to respond,
so at times from this course the creature
departs that has the power to swerve, so
driven, in some other direction;
and, just as one can see fire fall downward
from a cloud, so the creature's first impetus
drives it to earth, if deflected by false pleasure.
You should not wonder at your ascent, if I
judge well, otherwise than at a stream when
from a high mountain it descends to the base.
It would be a marvel in you if, free from
impediment, you had remained below, as if,
on earth, living fire should be motionless."
Then she turned her eyes back toward the heavens.

NOTES

1–142. The glory of Him . . . toward the heavens: The first canto of *Paradiso* reflects a synthesis of biblical theological traditions with the Neoplatonic and Aristotelian philosophical ideas absorbed by the intellectual culture of the thirteenth century (see Additional Notes 10 and 11). Introduced with topics of exordium drawn from classical epic, and endowed with a breadth of vision characteristic of the medieval *summae* of all knowledge, the journey of Dante's pilgrim recalls the rapture of Paul the Apostle to Heaven recorded in Christian Scripture, but is also conceived as an act of participation in the cycle of procession and the return of all beings to the source of their existence. Recognizing the mental effort and personal sacrifice necessary for so bold and ambitious a work, the poet begins by invoking divine assistance for a craft that is itself an expression of the art through which Nature, and ultimately God, fashions and guides the cosmos.

1–36. The glory of Him . . . Cyrrha will reply: An exordium or prologue (lines 1–12), is followed by an invocation (lines 13–35). The "executive" portion of the work—all the rest of *Paradiso*—begins at line 37. For *Ep*. 13, attributed to Dante, which comments on these lines, see Introduction, pp. 5–13, and notes below.

1–12. The glory of Him . . . the matter of my song: *Ep*. 13.49–52 draws from Cicero's *De inventione* to describe the task of the prologue: to render readers benevolent, by noting the poem's usefulness in relating the joys of Paradise; attentive, because of its admirable account of the celestial realm; and receptive, because it shows that if the poet was in Heaven, others may go there too.

1–3. The glory of Him . . . more and less elsewhere: *Ep*. 13.62–63 lists biblical passages on God's glory: Jer. 23.24, Ps. 138.7–9, Ecclus. 42.16, and Wisdom 1.7 ("the spirit of the Lord filled the whole world"), plus one from the Roman poet Lucan (*Phar*. 9.580): "Jupiter is whatever you see, wherever you go." Ps. 18.1, "The heavens declare the glory of God," is cited by commentators (cf. *Conv*. 2.5.12).

1. who moves all things: God is the "unmoved mover," an Aristotelian concept (*Metaphysics* 12.7) taken up by the scholastics (*ST* 1a q. 2 a. 3, q. 9. a. 1); compare *Purg*. 25.16–39, 70 ("first motor") and notes. That God's love moves all things is a refrain in the poem (see *Inf*. 1.39–40, 2.72 and notes). The echo of

Boethius's "O qui perpetua," line 3 ("you . . . give motion to all else" [*das cuncta moveri*]), is the first of many in *Paradiso*; see notes to lines 74, 97, 105, 115–17, 142; also 2.130–32, 133–48, 133–35 and notes.

2–3. penetrates through . . . less elsewhere: *Ep*. 13.64–65 comments: "The divine ray or divine glory penetrates and reglows through the universe. It penetrates as to essence; it reglows as to being"; and: "We see that one thing has its being in a more exalted grade, and another in a lower." *Ep*. 13.60–61 draws on the Neoplatonic *Liber de causis* (cited in *Conv*. 3.7.2) to explain how God's essence, insofar as he is the first and universal cause, is transmitted to secondary causes (the angels, who move the heavenly spheres) and to the other creatures; cf. *Conv*. 3.9.14). All beings reflect God's light, more and less intensely according to their places in the hierarchy of creation (see *Conv*. 3.7.2; *Par*. 13.52–87, 29.13–48; and 2.112–48 and 7.124–71 and notes). "More and less" is reiterated in line 111, and illustrated in lines 103–20. See also *Conv*. 3.7.3–9, 3.14.4; and Additional Notes 11, 12, and 13.

4–12. In the heaven . . . the matter of my song: The subject of the *Paradiso* is broached by naming the pilgrim's goal. The challenge to find adequate words, not new to Dante (see *VN* 41.7 and *Conv*. 3.4–5) recurs throughout *Paradiso* (e.g., 10.40–48, 14.103–18, 18.7–12, 23.55–63, etc.); cf. *Ep*. 13.83: "He [the author] has no knowledge, because he has forgotten; and he has not power, because if he remembered and retained the matter, nevertheless language fails." Plato's use of metaphors for what the intellect sees but cannot express is recalled in the same passage (see note to lines 64–75; for Dante's treatment of Plato's myths, see 4.49–50 and notes; also *Conv*. 2.4.4–5, and Additional Note 10). Aquinas allowed the use of metaphor in the attempt to describe God (*ST* 1a q. 1 a. 9).

4–6. In the heaven . . . and cannot utter: As an instance of how memory fails the intellect when this faculty, which man shares with the angels, descends from an exalted vision, *Ep*. 13.79 identifies the reference here to Paul "caught up" to the "third heaven" (adapting 2 Cor. 12.3–4):

> where he [Paul] says, "I know such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I know not, God knows), who was caught up [*raptus*] into Paradise and saw the hidden things of God [*vidit arcana Dei*], which it is not lawful for a man to utter [*qui non licet hominum loqui*]."

Epistle 13 makes Paul's experience a visual one; the Vulgate has it that he "heard secret words" [*audivit arcana verba*]. For Dante's view of the primacy of the intellect in approaching God, see 4.124–32, 5.4–7 and notes, and Additional Note 3.

The comparison of the pilgrim's journey to the rapture of Paul established at *Inf*. 2.32 recurs in *Paradiso* (see lines 14 and 73–74 below; also 2.37–38, 15.29–30, 26.10–12, and 30.49–51 and notes). See also Additional Note 7.

4. In the heaven that receives most of his light: Named only once in the poem (*Inf*. 2.21 and note), and here by circumlocution, this is the Empyrean, the last, or tenth, heaven, also the "first heaven" (*Purg*. 30.1) and "the supreme edifice of the world . . . in which the whole world is enclosed." (*Conv*. 2.3.11). *Ep*. 13.67–72 defines it as the sphere containing all the others, contained by none, remaining still while the others, moving within it, receive its formative power (see *Par*. 1.122, 2.111–14 and notes; also *Conv*. 2.3.9–11); this embracing stillness, which means it lacks nothing, justifies that it receives "most" of God's light. The Empyrean is emphasized in the *Epistle* and in *Paradiso* (see 2.112, 4.31–32, 22.61–66, 23.108, 27.110, 30.39, etc.) because it is the pilgrim's goal (lines 121–26), and the final cause of the poet's life and his poem. See Additional Note 14.

7–9. for as it draws near . . . memory cannot follow it: The goal of human desire is the sight of God, "face to face" (1 Cor. 13.12–13; see line 72 and note). *Ep*. 13.89 states of the souls in Heaven:

> their true blessednesss consists in the apprehension of Him who is the beginning of truth, as appears from what John says: "this is eternal life, to know you are the true God" [John 17.3] and from what Boethius says in his third book *On Consolation*: "To behold you is the end" ["O qui perpetua," line 27].

11. treasure up in my mind: For "mind" as "memory," see *Inf*. 2.8–9 and note; the idea of memory as a storehouse or treasure chest goes back to antiquity; *Trésor* [treasure] was the title of Brunetto Latini's encyclopedia (see *Inf*. 15.119–20 and note). See also Matt. 19.21 and *Par*. 23.133.

13–36. O good Apollo . . . Cyrrha will reply: Dante invokes the god Apollo for assistance in the labor of poetic elaboration (lines 22–24). Known also as the sun-god Phoebus (Ovid, *Met*. 2.36), Apollo traditionally dwelt on Mount Parnassus in Phocis, in Greece, along with the nine Muses (*Met*. 5.294–678). He was the god of prophecy, delivered by his oracle at Delphi, near Parnassus (line 30; and cf. *Aen*. 3.356–452). He punished the satyr Marsyas after defeating him in a musical competition (lines 19–21; cf. *Purg*. 1.7–12 and note), and he is the patron of those who strive for the laurels of victory (lines 25–27).

This appeal (but see 2.8–9 and note) is the fifth and longest of the poet's nine requests for assistance and power [*virtù*]. It does not mention the Muses, but five other requests do: two in *Inferno* (2.7–9, 32.10–12), two in *Purgatorio* (1.7–12, 29.37–42), and one in *Paradiso* (18.82–87); the poet also calls on his stars (*Par*. 22.112–22), and on God's light (*Par*. 30.97–99, 33.67–75).

13–14. O good Apollo . . . vessel of your power: Invoked for inspiration (lines 14, 19), Apollo stands for the triune Christian God (see lines 22, 28; cf. *Inf*. 3.1–9 and note), with implicit emphasis on the second person, the Son, or Wisdom, long associated with Apollo in Christian mythography; the sun is identified in *Conv*. 3.12.7–8 as the most fitting symbol of God. For the sun as a guide on the pilgrim's journey, see *Inf*. 1.17–18, *Purg*. 13.25–27, and cf. 2.7–9 and notes.

Dante's appeal to a pagan god in a sacred poem is consistent with previous instances (e.g., *Purg*. 6.118, addressed to "highest Jove," that is, to God's justice and omnipotence; see also 13.25–27 and note). Though classical topics of exordia are well attested in medieval Christian poetry, Dante's use of the originally pagan terminology is doubly bold: in its vindication of the dignity of classical forms and in its implicit claim that the pagan deity, rightly understood, is Christ.

13. last labor: See Vergil's first line for his last *Eclogue* (10.1): "O Arethusa, grant me this final labor [*extremum . . . laborem*]"; Aeneas, in founding Rome, was "compelled to . . . meet so many trials [*labores*]" (*Aen*. 1.10–11).

14. make me such a vessel of your power: Another reference to Paul (see lines 4–6, 74–75), who was God's "chosen vessel"[*vas electionis*] for evangelizing the Gentiles (see *Inf*. 2.28, echoing Acts 9.15).

15. the beloved laurel: Apollo instituted the laurel crown as a prize for victory after his failed pursuit of Daphne, the daughter of the river Peneus. Just before being caught by the god, she is transformed by her father into a laurel tree, which Apollo adopts as his device, wearing it in his hair, on his lyre, and on his quiver (Ovid, *Met*. 1.452–567; see *Met*. 1.557–58: "As you cannot be joined to me, you shall be my tree").

16–18. Until now one peak . . . what of the field remains: Antiquity divided the peaks of Parnassus, Nissa, and Cyrrha (Ovid, *Met*. 1.316–17) between Bacchus and Apollo. See Lucan, *Phar*. 5.72–73:

> With twin peaks Parnassus soars to heaven.
> The mountain is sacred to Phoebus and to Bromios [Bacchus].

Dante calls on both peaks to aid him in a task more ambitious than *Purgatorio*, where he relied on the Muse Calliope (*Purg*. 1.8–9 and note). What the peaks stand for is disputed; for Pietro di Dante, Nissa is knowledge of temporal things (*scientia*), and Cyrrha wisdom about the eternal (*sapientia*); De Angelis 1993 argues for eloquence (Nissa, Bacchus) and wisdom (Cyrrha, Apollo).

18. I must enter upon what of the field remains: *Aringo*, Dante's word for field, means the arena marked out for a contest, as in trial by combat; compare *Mon*. 3.1.3 ("I shall cast out the wicked and the lying from the ring"), as Dante prepares his defense of the Roman Empire against the temporal claims of the Church (see 5.19–24, with note, and Additional Note 2). Passages denouncing aspects of the contemporary Church appear in all but two of Dante's ten heavens (Carroll). For "field" [*campo*], see also *Purg*. 11.94–95, *Par*. 25.84 and notes.

19–21. come into my breast . . . the sheath of his members: Apollo, playing his lyre, defeats the flute-playing satyr Marsyas and punishes the satyr's presumption by having him flayed (Ovid, *Met*. 6.382–400). Renaissance mythographers, steeped in Neoplatonism, viewed the story as a fable of the soul's release from matter (Wind 1964); Dante portrays the satyr's torture as a violent but uplifting possession of the poet by the deity.

19. come into my breast and breathe there: Ovid is a key source for the myths exploited in this canto. See *Met*. 1.2–3: "You gods, who have yourselves wrought every change, inspire the beginning of my undertaking." Cf. *Purg*. 24.54–56 (see note). See also *Aen*. 6.46–51.

21. drawn forth from the sheath of his members: Dante follows Ovid on Marsyas's agony (*Met*. 6.385): "Why do you tear me [*detrahis*] from myself?" Dante describes the emergence of an "inner" self (the mind or spirit) from a shell of fleshliness (see Rigo 1994 and *Purg*. 2.121–23 and note).

22–27. O divine power . . . will make me worthy: The crowning of poets with laurel, ivy, or myrtle was known in antiquity (see *Purg*. 21.85–90 and note, and cf. Statius, *Theb*. 1.32–33, and *Achill*. 1.15–16). Dante states his desire to be crowned in his epistolary exchange of 1319 with Giovanni del Virgilio, a professor of rhetoric at Bologna (see *Eclogues* 1.34–44, 2.84–87; *Par*. 25.1–12 and notes), perhaps to rival Albertino Mussato, the poet crowned in Padua in 1315 (see 9.46–48 and notes).

24. stamped within my head: Aquinas comments that although Paul could neither retain nor express all of his vision, he could recall it in part through

images remaining in his mind, as the impression of an object remains after it is withdrawn (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 175 a. 4; cf. 33.100 and note, and *VN* 41.7). "Stamped" [*segnata*] should be seen in relation to lines 106–7 and 127–29 (see notes).

25–27. you will see me come . . . will make me worthy: The poet's imagined movement toward the laurel tree and his self-crowning reenacts Apollo's pursuit of Daphne (*Met*. 1.564–65). Having first identified with Marsyas, the poet now identifies with the god. At *DVE* 2.4.10 Dante invokes *Aen*. 6.128–31 on poets raised to Heaven as "sons of the gods"; see *Par*. 5.122–23 and note.

28–36. So seldom Father . . . Cyrrha will reply: Ovid's Apollo makes the laurel the reward for military success (*Met*. 1.560–561), while Statius, *Achill*. 1.15–16 suits it to both poets and chieftains [*duces*]. Dante laments both the neglect of poetic effort (see *Eclogue* 1.36–37) and the lack of imperial authority: no Holy Roman emperor was crowned in Rome between Frederick II in 1221 and Henry VII in 1312.

28. So seldom Father: Compare Phaethon's address of his father, the sun (*Met*. 2.36: "Phoebe, pater"; see 22.115–17 and note, as well as Additional Note 7). This address begins a return to father figures in *Paradiso* (see 17.1–6, 22.58–60, 26.91–93, and 31.63 and notes). The poet's kinship to Orpheus, son of Apollo and the Muse Calliope (allegorically, wisdom and eloquence), and a model for the poet at *Conv*. 2.1.3, is also suggested by commentators. See *Par*. 2.3 and note).

31–33. that the Peneian leaf . . . thirst for it: The rare desire for the laurel ("Peneian leaf") delights the deity. The poet's address of the god (line 28) shifts to an indirect address (lines 31–32) chastising the shortcomings of the age.

34–36. A tiny spark . . . Cyrrha will reply: As the *Aeneid* inspired Statius (*Purg*. 21.94–99 and note), Dante's example will spark a revival of letters, thus future petitions to and responses from the oracle at Cyrrha (see Lucan, *Phar*. 5.95–96; Statius, *Theb*. 3.474–76). Petrarch and Boccaccio did in fact follow in Dante's wake.

34. A tiny spark can result in a great flame: A proverbial formula that also echoes James 3.6 ("behold how small a fire kindleth a great wood"), previously drawn on by Dante to describe Ulysses's dangerous eloquence (see *Inf*. 26.85–90 and note); a positive instance of communicated fire is cited in the previous note.

37–72. The lantern of the world . . . reserves the experience: The poem proper begins with the sun's appearance and its effects on the world (37–45).

Beatrice gazes at the sun, and the pilgrim, strengthened by Eden, can now imitate her (46–63); looking back at her, he is transformed (64–72). Mentioned first at line 37 and used four more times in the canto (not including references to Apollo), the sun remains the principal active subject until line 44, and is then the principal object of sight in lines 46–63. See 11.49–57, 23.1–9, 31.124–29 and notes.

37–42. The lantern of the world . . . more to its manner: When rising at or near the spring equinox, the sun's apparent rising point [*foce*] may be imagined as defined by the intersection of four celestial circles: the first two are the celestial equator and the ecliptic (the imaginary track, tilted at 23½ degrees to the equator, traced by the sun in its annual journey through the zodiac; see 10.8–9 and *Conv*. 3.5, especially 13–19). Their intersections define the two equinoctial points traversed by the sun at the equinoxes (conventionally, March 21 and September 21). The third circle is the equinoctial colure, also traversing the equinoctial points, but passing through the north and south celestial poles. The last circle is the visual horizon, which varies for different observers on the globe; "rises to mortals" confirms the inclusion of this subjective circle. Other explanations (e.g., Baldacci 1965, Cornish 2000) blunt Dante's emphasis by not clustering *all* the intersections at the point where the sun emerges. See figure 1.

37. The lantern of the world: Cf. Ovid, *Met*. 2.35: "O universal light of the great world" [*O lux inmensi publica mundi*]. See Additional Note 7.

39. that joins four circles with three crosses: Benvenuto sees in the implicit number seven here the Sum of the Cardinal and theological Virtues (see *Purg*. 1.22–24, 8.88–93, 29.121–32, 31.103–8 and notes).

40–42. it comes forth . . . more to its manner: When rising near the vernal equinox, the astronomical beginning of spring, the sun's invigorating effects are enhanced by the stars in Aries, and its path in the ecliptic most vigorously fosters life on earth (see 10.7–21 and note). Dante describes these effects with the metaphor of the wax seal (see 8.127–29, 13.67–81 and notes). The sun both prepares ("tempers") the wax, the *matter* of the world (that is, it influences the mixing of the four material elements of earth, water, air, and fire) and imposes on that matter its determining *form* (the seal) by producing specific substances (see 13.70–72 and notes, and 7.124–41). "More to its manner" means that the substances formed resemble the solar nature, because effects resemble their causes (see note to line 4, and Additional Notes 2, 10, and 13). Other references to the

vivifying equinoctial sun are at *Inf*. 1. 38–40; *Par*. 5.87, and, implicitly, at 10.7–21.

41–42. tempers and seals the waxy world: See *Met*. 1.770: "The sun, who governs [*temperat*] all the world"; and compare line 24 ("stamped"). Since the sphere of the head and that of the cosmos are related as microcosm to macrocosm (*Timaeus* 44d), the sun's effect on the world is echoed in the poet's shaping, with the help of the sun god Apollo, the "matter" of his poem (see lines 13, 22–24; also 127–29). See Additional Notes 8 and 14.

43–44. such an outlet . . . and evening here: "Near it" [*quasi*], as the journey takes place 8–14 April 1300, after the March 21 equinox, and the sun rises from a different outlet each day (see *Conv*. 3.5.13–19). "Here" is Italy, in the northern hemisphere, where the poet writes, and it is nightfall; "there" is Purgatory.

44–45. there the hemisphere . . . and this one black: The pluperfect "had made morning" refers to the sun's previous rising; as Beatrice and the pilgrim prepare to ascend, the sun reaches the meridian: it is noon (see *Purg*. 33.104), the hour that symbolizes the consummation of time in eternity.

46–48. when I saw Beatrice . . . fixed its sight there so: In medieval bestiaries the mother eagle forces her eaglets to look into the sun (*Trésor* 1.145.2); only the truebred offspring tolerate the sight. See 23.1–12 and note; also *Purg*. 9.21, 32.109–17 and notes.

49–54. And as a second ray . . . beyond our wont: The pilgrim's imitation of Beatrice's gaze at the sun (he does not look into her eyes until line 66) is like a ray of light reflected from a polished surface (cf. *Purg*. 15.16–24, 22–23 and notes). Line 1 is acted out: Beatrice's presence and gesture reflect divine glory to the pilgrim, whose upward glance is the splendor of returning light ("mounting upward"), the *epistrophè* or *reditus*. See line 142 and Additional Note 10.

51. like a pilgrim that wishes to return home: Cf. the "new" and the returning pilgrim of *Purgatorio* (8.1–6, 27.110–11 and notes). A comparison with the peregrine falcon may be intended; cf. *Purg*. 14.148–50, 19.61–69 and notes.

55–63. Much is permitted there . . . with another sun: *Conv*. 3.3.1–8 explains why mixed elemental bodies and other creatures enjoy enhanced vigor in their places of origin. Since Eden is the home of the human race, the pilgrim's power of sight is now strong enough for him to stare directly at the sun.

64–75: Beatrice was fixed . . . with your light: Dante fashions a complex transition at the center of the canto in order to describe the effect of gazing on Beatrice: the pilgrim is first transformed within himself [*dentro*, line 67], like the fisherman Glaucus in Ovid's tale, then becomes like Paul (alluded to in lines 73–75) in his removal upward to Heaven. See Brownlee 1991.

64–69. Beatrice was fixed . . . other gods in the sea: In Eden, the pilgrim saw the two natures of Christ in the form of the gryphon, each nature separately reflected in Beatrice's eyes (*Purg*. 31.118–26 and note, and see 2.37–42 and note). That sight, compared to eating (*Purg*. 31.128, and see 2.10–12 and note), is a precedent for how the pilgrim's experience of gazing at Beatrice is analogous to Glaucus's "tasting" and transformation. See Additional Note 1.

67–69: Gazing at her . . . other gods in the sea: Ovid tells how the Boeotian fisherman Glaucus (*Met*. 13.904–59), seeing fish revive when laid on grass near the shore, chews some of the same grass: "Suddenly I felt my heartstrings tremble within me, and my breast was rapt with desire for another nature" (13.944–46). Diving into the water, Glaucus is transformed into a sea god: "When my sense returned to me, I was all different in my body from what I was before, nor was my mind the same" (13.958–59). Pseudo-Dionysius, cited by Aquinas, may explain Dante's surprising choice of fable: "It is more suitable to transmit the divine things in Scripture under the figure of base bodies than under noble ones" (*ST* 1a q. 1 a. 9 ad 3); see 10.115–17 and note, and Additional Note 10.

68. what Glaucus became tasting the herb: Ovid's Glaucus tastes the magic herbs in his throat [*guttura*], *Met*. 13.942–43. Like Glaucus, the pilgrim tastes in order to see, synesthesia being known to Dante from Ps. 33.9: "O taste and see" [*gustate et videte*]; see 3.37–39, 30.111, and *Purg*. 31.128 and notes. Compare Dante's account of Adam's sin as "the tasting [*gustar*] of the tree" in defiance of God's prohibition (Gen. 3.5; see *Par*. 26.115; also 32.123 and notes). With Beatrice to lead him, the pilgrim lawfully renews Adam's quest for knowledge. See also 10.6, 18.1–3 and notes.

69. that made him a consort of the other gods in the sea: The commentators refer to Jesus' words at John 10.34: "Is it not written in your law [Ps. 81.6]: 'I said you are gods'"? [*dii estis*]; also *Consol*. 3.pr.10.25: "Every happy man is a god, though by nature God is one only; but nothing prevents there being many by participation." See *Conv*. 4.21.10 and *Mon*. 1.12.6, cited at note to

5.19–24. For "consort" Rigo 1994 cites 2 Peter 1.4: "By these [Christ's promises] you may be made partakers [*consortes*] of the divine nature."

70–72. To signify transhumanizing . . . reserves the experience: Like the memory of Heaven as a "shadow" (line 23), the Glaucus story fails to render the pilgrim's experience (see *Conv.* 3.4.9–11), but stands for it as a sign or "example" (see also *VN* 41.13). The bold coinage *trasumanar* also attests to the poet's effort at representation, and has suggested to commentators an ascent culminating in the pilgrim's vision at the end of the poem; to what extent the present passage anticipates the process referred to by some critics as deification [*deificari*] is debated (see Botterill 1994). See notes to lines 25–27, 58–60, and 31.100–102 and note.

70. To signify transhumanizing *per verba* [in words] **is impossible:** The line echoes part of Dante's poetic credo ("I go signifying," *Purg.* 24.50–52), while *trasumanar* itself recalls that Glaucus's example is a *transumptio* [metaphor].

72. those to whom grace reserves the experience: That is, those who will enjoy the beatific vision after death. For Augustine and Aquinas, only Moses and Paul saw God in his essence, or "face to face," in this life (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 175 a. 3), though Dante appears to claim the privilege (see 30.96 and note). "Experience" recalls Dante's Ulysses, who commends it (*Inf.* 26.116); cf. *Purg.* 1.130–32, *Par.* 27.82–83 and notes; see also *Inferno* Additional Note 11.

73–142. If I was solely . . . toward the heavens: The second half of the canto has the pilgrim rise to hear the music of the spheres and see the cosmos filled by light (lines 76–81), exciting his curiosity (85–93). How can he, if he has a body, rise through spheres that are material (lines 94–99)? Beatrice explains that since places are ordered for all things (100–126), the pilgrim, whose mind is fiery, will naturally rise (91–93, 136–42), unless pulled down by misconception or misplaced love (127–35). For the crucial problem implicit in lines 94–99, see note to lines 73–74.

73–75. If I was solely . . . with your light: Paul's "third heaven" (2 Cor. 12.2) was taken to mean the Empyrean (see *ST* 2a 2ae q. 175 a. 3 ad 4).

73–74. If I was solely . . . you know: God infuses the soul last, when Nature's fashioning of the brain is complete (see *Purg.* 25.67–75, with notes). Evoked again is the visit to the "third heaven" reported by Paul, whose ignorance of whether he was in the body or out of it ("I know not . . . God knows" [*nescio . . . deus scit*]), echoed in lines 4–6, is echoed by Glaucus's ignorance of how he was changed ("my mind does not retain the rest" [*nec mens mea cetera sensit*], *Met.* 13.957). Whether the pilgrim rises with his body is left unanswered;

Aquinas insisted Paul himself never knew (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 175 a. 6); but see 2.37–42, with note.

74. O Love who governs the heavens: The apostrophe adapts "O qui perpetua mundum ratione *gubernas*" [O you who with perpetual reason govern the world] (see also *Par*. 1.1, 115–16). See also *Consol*. 2.m.8.28–30, cited in *Mon*. 1.9.3.

76–81. When the wheeling . . . so extended a lake: Departing from Aristotle and most scholastics, Dante accepts the Pythagorean idea of the "music of the spheres" (Plato's version is at *Republic* 616b–617c). At Cicero's *SS* 5.1 (see 15.26 and note), Scipio the younger is instructed by his adoptive grandfather Scipio the elder:

> "That," replied my grandfather, "is a concord of tones separated [*distinctis*] by unequal but nevertheless carefully proportioned intervals, caused by the rapid motion of the spheres themselves. The high and low tones blended together [*temperans*] produce different harmonies.

That this is Dante's source is indicated by "temper and distinguish" in line 78. See Additional Note 8.

76–77. When the wheeling . . . by being desired: In *Conv*. 2.14.13 (and implicitly at *Inf*. 10.107—see note). Dante holds that celestial motion, which measures time, would cease at the Last Judgment (cf. Aquinas, *CG* 4.97). Here the turning of the spheres [*rota*] by the angelic intelligences, which began with the creation (see *Conv*. 2.3.9), is termed "sempiternal," meaning it will never cease. Bemrose 1983 treats the contradiction as unresolved by the poet.

82–84. The wonder of the sound . . . with such sharpness: That the motions and beauty of the luminaries and stars lure human contemplation, a Platonic commonplace, was mentioned at *Purg*. 14.148–50 and 19.61–63 (see notes). See line 142 and note, and the introduction to Durling/Martinez 1990.

85–141. Therefore she . . . should be motionless. The nineteen terzinas are a textual microcosm: three terzinas establish the pilgrim's *rising* motion (lines 85–93), compared to the *descending* fire of lightning; these balance the final terzinas (lines 133–41), which reaffirm that the pilgrim *rises* like fire, parallel to how water flows *downward*, and in contrast to erring creatures, which *fall* like lightning, violently. Similar criteria, and the metaphor of providential teleology, organize the rest.

82–93. The wonder of the sound . . . you going back to yours: Beatrice's answer appeals to the natural motion of the elements toward places allotted them by their "weight," which is also their desire (see Augustine, *Confessions* 13.9.10; *Inf.* 5.39 and note). The pilgrim's curiosity is an instance of the "laboring spirit" driving him toward God, the first cause; see also lines 97, 122, 141.

85. who saw me as I do myself: The pilgrim is transparent to Beatrice, as he will be to all the souls in heaven, who know in God; but not all read his mind (see 9.73–81 and note), and he is often told to speak audibly (see 15.64–69 and note).

88–99. and began . . . these light bodies: The pilgrim's mistake is supposing himself still on earth. His error makes him swollen [*grosso*] and heavy; once he understands, he shrugs off the burden as if a garment (line 94), or false pregnancy. These lines are linked by commentators to lines 19–21 and to Marsyas's skin as the sign of fallen Adamic fleshliness (Eph. 4.22–23, Colossians 3.1–2, 9–10); cf. Adam's "garments of skin" (Gen. 3.21) and *Purg.* 2.122 and note.

97. and I said Satisfied just now *requïevi* [I rested]: The redundancy (satisfaction and repose are virtual synonyms) and the Latin underscore the concept (see also lines 122 and 141): to rest in gratified desire for God is the goal of the journey. Cf. Augustine, *Confessions* 1.1.2: "Our heart is restless [*inquietum*] until it rests [*requiescat*] in you" and Boethius' hymn "O qui perpetua," line 27: "You are the peaceful rest [*requies*] of the just." See also line 85.

100–126. Wherefore she . . . all that it looses: The ranking of created beings in a hierarchy is one way the universe resembles its creator (lines 100–108), an idea emphasized by Pseudo-Dionysius (*De cael. hier.* 3; see 10.115–17 and note). This order moves creatures to return to their creator (lines 109–20), and drives the pilgrim toward his goal (lines 124–26). The pilgrim's question leads Beatrice to unfolding cosmic order more generally; see 2.112–48 and notes.

105. a form that makes the universe resemble God: Cf. "O qui perpetua," lines 7–8: "You carry in Mind the beauteous world, form it to like pattern."

106–7. Here the high creatures . . . the eternal Worth: The angels, the first creatures, contemplate the divine plan. It was a commonplace that God left his trace as Creator as an "image" in mankind and a "likeness" in the rest of creation, after Gen. 1.26, Ps. 18.2, and Rom. 1.20; see *Mon.* 1.8.2, cited at 5.11 (with note).

109–20. In the order . . . that have intelligence and love: Providence "sorts" different natures, whether elemental bodies (lines 115, 117) or mortal beings

(line 116), as well as men and angels (lines 106, 118–20), so that each moves toward its satisfaction and rest. Commentators claim line 116 does not refer to human beings; but as souls in bodies, humans share intellection with the angels as well as the inclinations of lower creatures including the elements (*Conv*. 3.3.2–11), thus making the predicament of lines 127–41 possible.

112. different ports: In *Convivio* 2.1.1 sailing toward port suggests both the task of writing and the journey of life (*Conv*. 4.28.2); here, both the pilgrim and the poet participate in the metaphor. See *Mon*. 3.16.10–11; *Par*. 2.1–18, 27.146–48 and notes.

118–26. nor does this bow . . . all that it looses: Adopting Aristotle's idea that the operations of Nature are ordained to the best possible end, Dante conceives of Providence, directing all things back to God, as an archer aiming at a target (cf. 29.22–24 and note).

120. those that have intelligence and love: That is, human beings and angels. The line echoes the first line of Dante's canzone "Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore" [Ladies who have intelligence of love] (see *Purg*. 24.49–51 and note), with rich implications for *Paradiso*; see Durling/Martinez 1990, Chapters 1 and 6.

121–26. the Providence . . . all that it looses: The goal of Beatrice and the pilgrim is the Empyrean (see lines 4–6), which contains the *primum mobile*, the fastest-moving sphere.

127–41. It is true that . . . should be motionless: The designs of Providence can miscue, and creatures swerve from their natural inclination: fire can "fall" in the form of lightning (lines 133–35). The pilgrim's fiery spirit naturally rises; remaining below would make him like fire that failed to rise (line 140). For the lightning metaphor, cf. *Purg*. 9.28–30, 12.25–27, 32.109–17 and notes.

127–29. It is true that . . . deaf to respond: Providence is like a skilled artisan imposing form on matter, which can be ill disposed to receive it (see Chapters 3–4 of Durling/Martinez 1990). For God's Providence compared to human art, implied in lines 40–42, see 2.127–48 and notes, and cf. *Mon*. 2.2.2–4, citing "O qui perpetua," lines 4–5; see also Additional Notes 2 and 13.

142. Then she turned her eyes back toward the heavens: See note to lines 49–54. Line 1 of the canto proclaims God as flowing into the universe; the last line follows the current of human returning to him.

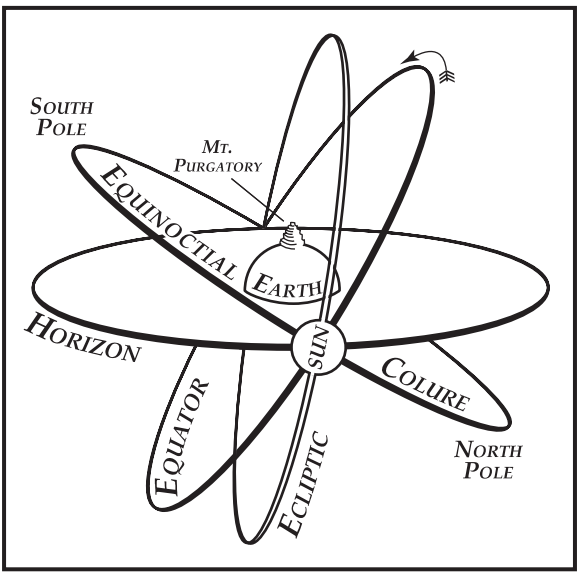

Figure 1. "Four circles make three crosses"

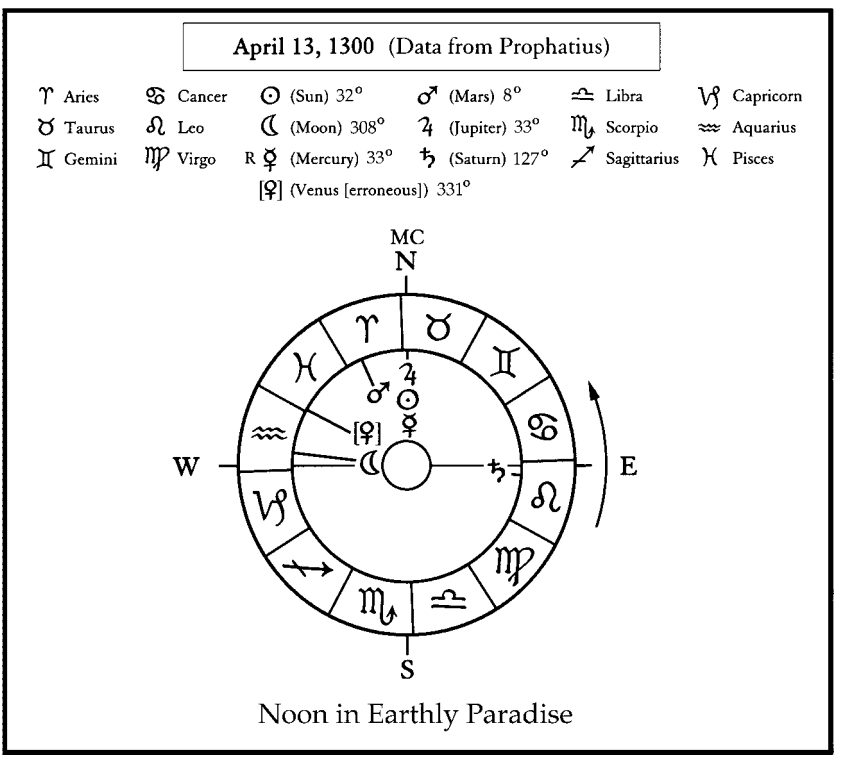

Figure 2. Horoscope for April 13, 1300, noon in the Earthly Paradise

CANTO 2

O voi che siete in piccioletta barca, 1
desiderosi d'ascoltar, seguiti
dietro al mio legno, che cantando varca:
tornate a riveder li vostri liti, 4
non vi mettete in pelago, ché forse,
perdendo me, rimarreste smarriti;
l'acqua ch' io prendo già mai non si corse; 7
Minerva spira, e conducemi Appollo,
e nove Muse mi dimostran l'Orse.
Voi altri pochi che drizzaste il collo 10
per tempo al pan de li angeli, del quale
vivesi qui ma non sen vien satollo:
metter potete ben per l'alto sale 13
vostro navigio, servando mio solco
dinanzi a l'acqua che ritorna equale;
que' gloriosi che passaro al Colco 16
non s'ammiraron come voi farete,
quando Iasón vider fatto bifolco.
La concreata e perpetüa sete 19
del deïforme regno cen portava
veloci quasi come 'l ciel vedete.
Beatrice in suso e io in lei guardava, 22
e forse in tanto in quanto un quadrel posa
e vola e da la noce si dischiava,
giunto mi vidi ove mirabil cosa 25
mi torse il viso a sé, e però quella
cui non potea mia cura essere ascosa,
volta ver' me, sì lieta come bella: 28
"Drizza la mente in Dio grata," mi disse,
"che n'ha congiunti con la prima stella."

CANTO 2

Warning to readers—Moon: the spots on the moon—an experiment with mirrors—the nature of the universe—the role of the heavenly spheres—of the angels—formal principles

O you who in little barks, desirous of listening,
have followed after my ship that sails onward
singing:
turn back to see your shores again, do not put
out on the deep sea, for perhaps, losing me, you
would be lost;
the waters that I enter have never before been
crossed; Minerva inspires and Apollo leads me,
and nine Muses point out to me the Bears.
You other few, who stretched out your
necks early on for the bread of the angels,
which one lives on here though never sated by it:
you can well set your course over the salt
deep, staying within my wake before the water
returns level again;
those glorious ones who sailed to Colchos did
not so marvel as you will do, when they saw
Jason become a plowman.
The innate and perpetual thirst for the deiform
realm was carrying us up as swiftly, almost, as
you see the sky move.
Beatrice was gazing upward and I at her,
and perhaps in the time in which a crossbow
bolt comes to rest, and flies, and leaves the nut,
I saw I had reached a place where marvelous
things drew my sight, and therefore she from
whom my care could not be hidden,
turning toward me, joyous as she was beautiful:
"Direct your mind to God in gratitude," she told
me, "who has conjoined us with the first star."

Parev' a me che nube ne coprisse
lucida, spessa, solida e pulita,
quasi adamante che lo sol ferisse.
Per entro sé l'etterna margarita
ne ricevette, com' acqua recepe
raggio di luce, permanendo unita.
S'io era corpo—e qui non si concepe
com' una dimensione altra patio,
ch' esser convien se corpo in corpo repe—
accender ne dovria più il disio
di veder quella essenza in che si vede
come nostra natura e Dio s'unìo.
Lì si vedrà ciò che tenem per fede,
non dimostrato, ma fia per sé noto
a guisa del ver primo che l'uom crede.
Io rispuosi: "Madonna, sì devoto
com' esser posso più, ringrazio lui
lo qual dal mortal mondo m'ha remoto.
Ma ditemi: che son li segni bui
di questo corpo, che là giuso in terra
fan di Cain favoleggiare altrui?"
Ella sorrise alquanto, e poi: "S'elli erra
l'oppinïon," mi disse, "d'i mortali
dove chiave di senso non diserra,
certo non ti dovrien punger li strali
d'ammirazione omai, poi dietro ai sensi
vedi che la ragione ha corte l'ali.
Ma dimmi quel che tu da te ne pensi."
E io: "Ciò che n'appar qua sù diverso
credo che fanno i corpi rari e densi."
Ed ella: "Certo assai vedrai sommerso
nel falso il creder tuo, se bene ascolti
l'argomentar ch'io li farò avverso.
La spera ottava vi dimostra molti
lumi, li quali e nel quale e nel quanto
notar si posson di diversi volti.
Se raro e denso ciò facesser tanto,
una sola virtù sarebbe in tutti,
più e men distributa e altrettanto.

It seemed to me that a cloud covered us,
shining, dense, solid, clear, like a diamond struck
by the sun.
Within itself the eternal pearl received us, as
water receives a ray of light while still remaining
whole.
If I was a body—and down here it cannot be
conceived how one dimension could accept an
other, as must occur, if body coincide with body—
it should kindle within us more desire to see
that Essence where is seen how our nature and
God became one.
There we shall see that which we hold by
faith, and not by demonstration, but it will be
self-evi-dent, like the first truth one believes.
I replied, "My lady, as devoutly as I can I
thank him who has removed me from the mortal
world.
But tell me: what are the dark marks in this
body, that make people down there on earth tell
fables about Cain?"
She smiled a little and then: "If," she said,
"the opinion of mortals errs where no key of
sense unlocks,
surely the arrows of wonder ought not to
pierce you now, since you see that reason has
short wings even when following the senses.
But tell me what you think of it yourself." And
I: "What looks different to us up here is caused,
I think, by bodies rare and dense."
And she: "Certainly you will find your belief
much submerged in error, if you listen carefully
to the argument I shall make against it.
The eighth sphere displays to you many
lights, which both in quality and size can be
seen to have different faces.
If rare and dense alone caused that, one sole
power would be in all of them, distributed into
more and less, and sometimes equally.

Virtù diverse esser convegnon frutti
di princìpi formali, e quei, for ch'uno,
seguiterieno a tua ragion distrutti.
Ancor, se raro fosse di quel bruno
cagion che tu dimandi, o d'oltre in parte
fora di sua matera sì digiuno
esto pianeto, o, sì come comparte
lo grasso e 'l magro un corpo, così questo
nel suo volume cangerebbe carte.
Se 'l primo fosse, fora manifesto
ne l'eclissi del sol, per trasparere
lo lume come in altro raro ingesto.
Questo non è: però è da vedere
de l'altro, e s'elli avvien ch'io l'altro cassi,
falsificato fia lo tuo parere.
S'elli è che questo raro non trapassi,
esser conviene un termine da onde
lo suo contrario più passar non lassi,
e indi l'altrui raggio si rifonde
così come color torna per vetro
lo qual di retro a sé piombo nasconde.
Or dirai tu ch'el si dimostra tetro
ivi lo raggio più che in altre parti
per esser lì refratto più a retro.
Da questa instanza può deliberarti
esperïenza, se già mai la provi,
ch' esser suol fonte ai rivi di vostr' arti.
Tre specchi prenderai, e i due rimovi
da te d'un modo, e l'altro più rimosso
tr' ambo li primi li occhi tuoi ritrovi.
Rivolto ad essi, fa che dopo il dosso
ti stea un lume che i tre specchi accenda
e torni a te da tutti ripercosso.
Ben che nel quanto tanto non si stenda
la vista più lontana, lì vedrai
come convien ch'igualmente risplenda.
Or, come ai colpi de li caldi rai
de la neve riman nudo il suggetto
e dal colore e dal freddo primai,

Different powers must necessarily be the fruit
of formal principles, and these, except for one,
would according to your thinking be destroyed.
Again, if rare matter were the cause of the
darkness you inquire about, either the rare
matter would go entirely through, where
there are spots
in this planet, or, as a living body alternates
fat and lean, so it would change pages through
its volume.
The first case would be manifested in
eclipses of the sun, for the light would shine
through, as it does through any other rare matter.
This is not so: therefore let us look to the
other possibility, and if I break that down, too,
your opinion will be shown to be false.
If the rare matter is not continuous, there
must be a limit where its contrary blocks passage,
and from there, rays of light must bound back,
just as color returns through glass that has lead
hidden behind it.
Now you will say that the ray appears darker
there than elsewhere because it is reflected
from further back.
From this objection an experiment can free
you, if you ever try it, for from experience derive
the streams of all your arts.
Take three mirrors, and place two of them at
the same distance from you, and let your eyes find
the third more distant and between the first two.
Facing toward them, have a light from behind
you shine on the three mirrors and return to you
reflected from all three.
Even though the more distant image is not as
extended in size, you will see that it is equally
bright there.
Now, as under the blows of the warm rays of
the sun the subject of snow remains naked of its
former color and chill,

così rimaso te ne l'intelletto
voglio informar di luce sì vivace
che ti tremolerà nel suo aspetto.
Dentro dal cielo de la divina pace
si gira un corpo ne la cui virtute
l'esser di tutto suo contento giace.
Lo ciel seguente, c' ha tante vedute,
quell' esser parte per diverse essenze,
da lui distratte e da lui contenute.
Li altri giron per varie differenze
le distinzion che dentro da sé hanno
dispongono a lor fini e lor semenze.
Questi organi del mondo così vanno,
come tu vedi omai, di grado in grado,
che di sù prendono e di sotto fanno.
Riguarda bene omai sì com' io vado
per questo loco al vero che disiri,
sì che poi sappi sol tener lo guado.
Lo moto e la virtù d'i santi giri,
come dal fabbro l'arte del martello,
da' beati motor convien che spiri,
e 'l ciel cui tanti lumi fanno bello
de la mente profonda che lui volve
prende l'image e fassene suggello.
E come l'alma dentro a vostra polve
per differenti membra e conformate
a diverse potenze si risolve,
così l'intelligenza sua bontate
multiplicata per le stelle spiega,
girando sé sovra sua unitate.
Virtù diversa fa diversa lega
col prezïoso corpo ch'ella avviva,
nel qual, sì come vita in voi, si lega.
Per la natura lieta onde deriva,
la virtù mista per lo corpo luce
come letizia per pupilla viva.
Da essa vien ciò che da luce a luce
par differente, non da denso e raro:
essa è formal principio che produce,
conforme a sua bontà, lo turbo e 'l chiaro."

just so, you, who have become such in intellect,
I wish to inform with light so lively it will tremble
when you see it.
Within the Heaven of God's peace there
turns a body under whose power lies the being
of all that it contains.
The next heaven, which has so many sights,
divides that being into different essences, separated
by it, yet contained by it.
The other spheres through various
differences dispose the distinctions held within
them to their ends and to their sowings.
These organs of the world thus descend, as
you can see, by degrees, for they take from
above and fashion below.
Now pay attention to how I go from here to
the truth that you desire, so that later you will be
able to hold to the ford alone.
The motion and the power of the holy spheres
necessarily must breathe from the blessed movers,
as the art of the hammer does from the smith,
and the heaven made beautiful by so many
lights takes the image from the profound mind
turning it and acts as its seal.
And just as the soul within your dust resolves
itself through different members conformed to
different faculties,
so the Intelligence unfolds its goodness, diversi fied
through the stars, turning itself about its unity.
Each different power makes a different alloy
with the precious body it vivifies, in which, like
life in you, it binds itself.
Because of the happy nature from which it
derives the mixed power shines through the body
like gladness through the pupil of a living eye.
From that nature comes what seems different
from light to light, not from dense and rare: it is
a formal principle that produces,
conformably with its goodness, the dark and
the bright."

NOTES

1–18. O you who . . . become a plowman: This passage is unique in the *Comedy* in explicitly distinguishing two groups of readers with differing levels of competence (this was in part anticipated in *Inf.* 9.61–63) and in counseling the less qualified to read no further: only readers who acquired early training in philosophy and theology are encouraged to continue, and they are cautioned to pay close attention (to sail close behind the poet's vessel). Both apostrophes (1–9 and 10–18) are formulated in terms of the traditional trope of the composition of poetry as a sea voyage (see *Purg.* 1.1–3, with note), here developed to an unprecedented degree: the daring of the poet's undertaking is compared to that of the Argonauts, the heroes who sailed from the Aegean the entire length of the Black Sea to acquire the Golden Fleece: according to the myth, the Argo was the very first ship, constructed under the supervision of Minerva (in Latin the story is told in *Met.* 7.1–158, in *Heroides* 12, and in Valerius Flaccus's *Argonautica*, which Dante seems not to have known). The analogy with Argo recurs at the climactic end of the poem, in 33.95–96 (cf. 25.7), and this proem is echoed in 23.67–68 (cf. the grandiose sea image in 1.109–12). One should note the underlying parallel with the "folle volo" [mad flight] of Ulysses (*Inf.* 26.90–142, with notes), in which a leader urges his followers to sail out upon the deep, where they perish. The best discussions of Dante's use of the myth of Argo are Curtius 1950 and Hollander 1969.

With the long proposition (statement of subject) and invocation of 1.1–36, these two addresses to readers, the first in the cantica, provide an introduction to the *Paradiso* that is much more elaborate than those to the first two canticheche (*Inf.* 1.1–9 and 2.1–9; *Purg.* 1.1–12). (The other addresses to the reader in the *Paradiso* are: 5.109–14, 10.7–27, 13.1–21, 22.106–11, 23.64–69—a total of seven if one counts 2.1–9 and 10–18 as two.)

1–9. O you who . . . point out to me the Bears: Addressed to the first group of readers, those not trained in philosophy and theology, and therefore not equipped to follow the poet: if they lose his meaning they will be lost at sea; cf. 13.121–23: "Whoever fishes for the truth and lacks the art fares much worse than in vain when he leaves the shore, for he does not return the same as before." The idea that "losing me, you would be lost" refers to damnation (Hollander) is implausible: misunderstanding a poem, even Dante's, may disqualify one as a literary critic but is hardly a mortal sin; but cf. the doctrinal

care expressed in 4.61–66. (For the possible relation of this passage to the indirection of the poem's modes of exposition, see Introduction, pp. 17–18.)

The apparent elitism of this discouragement of unprepared readers may well be intended as a challenge, as well as a notice to all readers that this cantica will be a good deal more difficult than the first two. One should recall that the *Convivio* (cf. the note to lines 10–12) was conceived as an introduction to philosophy for those who knew no Latin, just as the *Comedy* itself was consciously intended as a blow against the hegemony of Latin learning. But Dante's ambivalence toward these two large categories of his readers was very deep (see Durling 1992).

The passage is a distant relative of Horace's famous "Odi profanum vulgus et arceo" [I hate the unsanctified mob and exclude it], *Odes* 3.1.1), and Benvenuto cites the scornful reference to the slow-witted in the proem to Boethius' *De Trinitate*: "Thus I contract my style into brevity, and the meanings I draw from the depths of philosophical disciplines I veil with new words . . . so that those unable to understand it will be seen to be unworthy of reading it."

1–3. little barks . . . my ship: The Italian *barca* [bark] is singular here, but its sense is distributive: each little "bark" is an individual (unprepared) reader, while the poet is a large ship [*legno*]. As line 14 makes clear, both groups of readers are thought of as sailing in small boats.

3. my ship that sails onward singing: The poet progresses singing his theme. The commentators have missed the reference to Argo in the idea of the singing ship: in some versions the Argo proceeds smoothly and swiftly because Orpheus is singing, giving the rowers the beat (e.g. *Theb.* 5.340–45); in others the wooden figurehead, provided by Minerva, sings oracles, as in Claudian 26.15–19.

8–9. Minerva inspires . . . point out to me the Bears: As the commentators observe, Minerva, goddess of wisdom, provides the (motivating) wind; Apollo is helmsman; the nine Muses (*nove* can also mean *new*—thus Christian as opposed to pagan, as Benvenuto says) point out the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, traditional guides to navigation (cf. *Purg.* 30.1–7). For the difficulty of sailing uncharted waters as overcome by mythic/supernatural help, see the previous note and the notes to lines 16–18.

10–18. You other few . . . become a plowman: The apostrophe of the readers the poet claims to desire for his poem.

10–12. You other few . . . sated by it: The "bread of the angels" here is theological (cf. Ps. 77.24–25) as well as philosophical doctrine; cf. *Conv.* 1.6–7:

> Few are those who acquire this habit of mind desired by all, and innumerable those prevented from acquiring it who live always hungry for this food. Oh happy those few who sit at the table where the food of the angels is eaten!

How far the conception of philosophy set forth in the *Comedy* diverges from that in the *Convivio* has been hotly debated.

10. stretched forth your necks: The image is that of newly hatched birds, probably young eagles (cf. *DVE* 2.4.9).

13–14. you can well . . . the salt deep: We translate Dante's term *navigio* as "course," in spite of the fact that the commentary tradition takes it to mean "a ship," in contrast to the "little barks" of the less well prepared. The problem is that the term *legno*, used for the poet's ship, is generic in connotation, while *navigio* as ship (particularly since its occupants would be plural—*voi altri*), connotes a ship larger than a mere *legno*. But the passage clearly suggests that the poet's ship is by far the largest, leaving a large wake in which smaller vessels can comfortably sail (a similar emphasis on the smallness of "barks" and the greatness of the poet's ship occurs in 23.67–69). Therefore it seems best to understand *navigio* as referring to the action of sailing (on the model of Latin *imperium* or *dominium* [rule], which can be either abstract or concrete).

16–18. those glorious ones . . . Jason become a plowman: The second explicit mention in the *Comedy* of Jason and the Argonauts, in a very different tonality from that in *Inf.* 18.83–96, where he is damned for his deception and sexual exploitation of Hysipyle and Medea. Here the emphasis is on spectacular heroism; in order to acquire the Golden Fleece, Jason harnessed two brass-hooved, iron-horned, fire-breathing bulls to plow a field and sow the teeth of the dragon slain by Cadmus, which again gave a crop of armed men. Jason succeeded in these tasks with the help of the king's daughter Medea, who gave him a protective ointment and then helped him drug the dragon guarding the Fleece. Benvenuto rightly took the parallel here and elsewhere to be between the entire enterprise of the Golden Fleece and the *Paradiso* as a whole.

17. did not so marvel: The phrase echoes *Met.* 7.120: "Mirantur Colchi, Minyae clamoribus augent" [The Colchians are amazed, the Greeks applaud with

shouts]. One notes Dante's transfer of the amazement to the Argonauts, appropriate because "you others" (line 10) have now implicitly become the poet's fellow voyagers. Jason's feat was marvelous because of the fierceness and fiery breath of the bulls; Dante's feat is marvelous and unprecedented in coupling the two peaks of Parnassus and bringing Heaven to earth (1.10–24, and cf. 25.1–2; for the insistence on doubleness, see the discussion of Gemini in Chapter 2 of Durling / Martinez 1990).

18. Jason become a plowman: Italian *bifolco* [plowman], from Lat. *bubulcus* (etymology uncertain), is clearly connected in Dante's mind with the number 2 (see previous note). The term *solco* [wake, furrow] in line 14 has itself prepared this line; it implies the traditional parallel between sailing and plowing, and of both with writing: pens are also metaphorically plows that leave furrows on the page (as in Martial 4.86.11). As a plowman, the poet is of course preparing for quite a different harvest from Jason's; there is a submerged reference here, the first of many in the *Paradiso*, to the Parable of the Sower (Matt. 13.3–9, 18–23), with its parallel between preaching and sowing seed, in which the Last Judgment is the harvest (see the notes to 22.151–54, and 23.20–21 and 130–32). In his curiously undeveloped lament for the death of Dante, Cino da Pistoia refers to him as an "anima [soul] bivolca [sower?]," probably referring to *Par.* 23.130–32, on which see our note.

19–30. The innate . . . with the first star: The narrative resumes where it had left off at the end of Canto 1; the moment is parallel to the beginning of narration in 1.37–54, especially lines 46–51.

19–20. The innate . . . carrying us up: For the "deiform realm," see 1.103–5, with notes.

22–30. Beatrice was gazing . . . the first star: The almost instantaneous ascent from the sphere of fire (1.76–81) to the moon itself.

23–24. perhaps in the time . . . leaves the nut: The most famous example of *hysteron proteron* (the rhetorical figure placing the last before the first) in the poem. For the importance of this figure for the *Paradiso* as a whole, see Additional Note 14. For arrow imagery as a major vehicle of Dante's teleological discourse, see the note to 1.126 and Durling / Martinez 1990.

25–26. I saw . . . drew my sight: Even more insistently than in the previous cantiche, in the *Paradiso* transitions are signalized by *visual* events.

31–36. It seemed to me . . . still remaining whole: In each heaven, the pilgrim and Beatrice enter the body of the planet itself. The imagined penetration is a vivid concretizing of the traditional metaphor for intellectual understanding, which sees *deeply* into its object (Dante is sharply aware of the correlation between the metaphors of penetrating and of grasping—i.e., surrounding, as in the term *comprehend*, It. *capire*, *comprendere*—for intellection; cf. the note on lines 35–36).

32–36. a cloud . . . remaining whole: In addition to the powerfully imagined sensory vividness, two traditional ideas are at work here: (1) the ancient, universal association of the moon with water (it was known to govern tides and women's menstrual cycles and was thought to rule the growth of all plants and animals; cf. the note on line 34); (2) according to Albertus Magnus, *Book of Minerals* 2.2.11, the transparency of certain stones is "caused by the large amount of Air and Water hardened and compacted within them": hence the associations of cloud, water, and diamond in line 32. Note that line 33 and lines 35–36 describe essentially the same phenomenon. See also the note to lines 143–45.

34. the eternal pearl: More than the vivid image is involved here, too: medieval writers never tired of repeating Pliny's account of the formation of pearls (9.54): that oysters and other shellfish rose to the surface of the waters at night and opened to receive drops of dew, which by gestation became pearls. Isidore of Seville (*Etymologies*, Book 16) adds that the entire life of sea creatures is naturally governed by the moon and that shellfish swell and diminish with its phases. Dante may also be remembering that the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem are pearls (Apoc. 21.21). Cf. the note to 3.10–15.

35–36. as water . . . remaining whole: As Palgen 1949 observes, with the ray of light (as well as the idea of conjunction, line 30), Dante is referring to astrological conceptions, light being the medium of all celestial influence on the sublunar. The analogy of sunlight penetrating water without disturbing its substance was traditionally used for the conception of Jesus, which did not affect the Virgin's virginity.

37–45. If I was a body . . . truth one believes: Dante echoes saint Paul's account of his vision (2 Cor. 12.2). This passage does not assert the physical presence of the pilgrim's body in the celestial ascent, as is often carelessly asserted (see Introduction, p. 16, and the note to 1.73–75); it raises the question in order to challenge the reader's reflectiveness and to subordinate the question to the doctrine of the union of the human and divine natures in Christ, to

which this is the first of many references in the *Paradiso* (cf., e.g., 6.13–21, 7.103–20). Each cantica of the *Comedy* closes in relation to it: *Inferno* with its parody in Satan (see *Inf.* 34.28–67, with notes); *Purgatorio* with its presence in the incomprehensible union of lion and eagle in the Christ-Gryphon (see especially the notes to *Purg.* 29.108–14, 31.118–26).

43–45. There we shall see . . . truth one believes: In the beatific vision we shall intuit the principle of the union of two natures in the way we intuit the "first truth" (see the discussion in the note to *Purg.* 18.55–60): the flash in which the pilgrim reaches this intuition is the culmination of his vision in Canto 33 (see especially lines 127–45, with notes), to which this passage directly alludes.

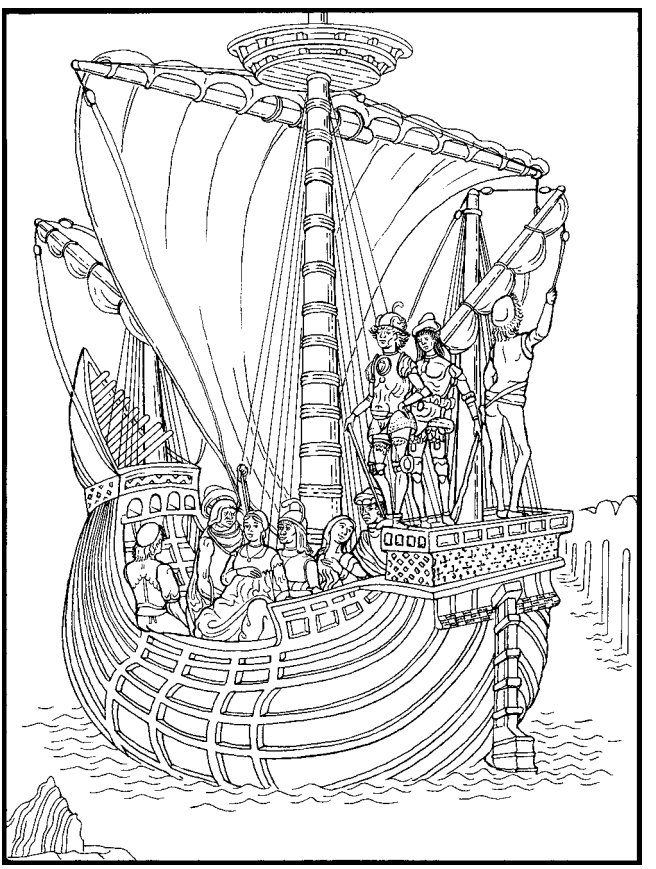

Figure 3. The Argo and the Argonauts

46–148. I replied . . . the dark and the bright: Two thirds of the canto are now devoted to the nature of the spots on the moon; this apparently trivial question turns out to involve the fundamental structure of the entire universe. After the pilgrim has raised the question and stated his own mechanistic view (Dante is correcting his own earlier opinion; see the note to lines 59–60), Beatrice immediately identifies it as erroneous (lines 58–63); she develops an elaborate *refutation* (lines 64–109), followed by *confirmation* (proof of the correct view); it is in fact a complete cosmology, both parts of which, clearly demarcated, enact microcosmically the cycle of procession and return.

49–51. But tell me . . . fables about Cain: Lines 31–33 have made it clear that the moon spots are not visible from the supposed vantage point of the pilgrim and Beatrice within the moon (according to 22.139–41, the spots are visible only from below); the explanation to be given by Beatrice is already implied. Note that in line 49 the pilgrim addresses Beatrice with the respectful *voi*-form of the verb [*dite*], as throughout (cf. the note on 31.79–90).

51. fables about Cain: A striking metonymy names the moon as "Cain and his thorns" (*Inf.* 20.126), in the circle of the soothsayers. The notion that Cain, or sometimes Judas, was condemned to dwell on the moon, often carrying a bundle of thorns, was widespread in medieval folklore and thought to be associated with magic. This is the first of many allusions to Hell in the *Paradiso*.

52–57. If, she said, the opinion . . . following the senses: Beatrice is assuming, with Aristotle and Aquinas, that all human knowledge is based on sensory perception (cf. 4.40–42); "the key of sense" refers to sensory error sometimes being correctible by closer or fuller perception. But even when full sensory perception is available, reason is imperfect ("has short wings").

59–60. What looks different . . . bodies rare and dense: This mechanical explanation was widely accepted in Dante's time, supported by Averroes' authority (in his commentary on Aristotle's *De coelo*, Averroes maintained that all the heavenly bodies were identical in species, differing only in relative density and rarity); a famous passage in *RR* 16809–64 adopted his theory; as did Dante in *Conv.* 2.13.9: "The shadows in [the moon] . . . are nothing but the rarity of its body, in which the rays of the sun cannot be intercepted and reflected back, as they are in its other parts." With 26.124–32, this is one of Dante's most striking self-corrections.

61–105. Certainly you will find . . . equally bright there: Beatrice's refutation has two main parts, a *reductio ad absurdum* of the pilgrim's view (lines 64–72), and an appeal to supposed experimental evidence, inductive in structure (lines 73–105).

61–62. much submerged in error: Note that Beatrice's metaphor identifies error as related in some way to water and connects it with the power of the moon (cf. the note to lines 106–11).

64–72. The eighth sphere . . . thinking be destroyed: Beatrice's *reductio ad absurdum* is deductive in several ways; it proceeds from a general proposition to a particular conclusion, showing that the implications of the pilgrim's view conflict with a known truth; and it mimics astrological causality, which descends (is deduced, brought down) from the celestial (in this case the highest diversified sphere, that of the fixed stars) to the sublunar, as do lines 112–48.

64–66. The eighth sphere . . . different faces: The many stars in the sphere of the fixed stars can be seen to differ in quality ("have different faces [*volti*]"; the term already implies *specific* difference). The astrological tradition consistently referred to the planets' "faces" and thought of them as regarding each other from various angles, called "aspects." See below, lines 133–45, with notes, and cf. *Quaestio* 21.71–72.

67–69. If rare and dense . . . sometimes equally: Differences in the single quality of density would produce only greater or lesser intensity of a single kind of influence ("one sole power"), which would thus be shared (distributed) among all the stars.

70–72. Different powers . . . be destroyed: Beatrice here states only one major assumption among the many she takes for granted (see lines 112–48, with notes): that the diversity of the influence exerted by the stars requires them to have formal differences, that is, to differ in their essences, to belong to different species; this is very close to the positions argued by Albert and Thomas (see Litt 1963).

73–105. Again, if rare matter . . . equally bright there: The second part of Beatrice's refutation. She now assumes the pilgrim's view as possible and subject to experimental verification, dividing it into two variants: the rare portions of the moon, the dark spots, go either entirely through it, parallel to the rays of the sun (lines 74–75) or only partially through (lines 76–78). This division is

probably the result of Dante's meditation on *RR* 16809–64, which uses the analogy of the mirror but seems only to envisage the first of these variants.

76–78. as a living body . . . through its volume: That is, the rare portions would extend traversely to the rays of the sun, bounded by denser matter. Two analogies operate here: that of a book with pages of different materials, and that of a living body; both will be picked up again in the confirmation.

79–82. The first case . . . This is not so: Empirical refutation of the first possible case of the pilgrim's idea: if the rarified portion of the moon extended all the way from one side to the other, parallel to the rays of the sun, the fact would be perceptible during solar eclipses, but it is not.

85–105. If the rare matter . . . equally bright there: The second possibility: the rare portions extend only partway through the moon, in which case the sunlight would strike a dense portion that would reflect it. To the possible objection that the brightness of the reflection would be diminished by the distance, Beatrice replies by an appeal to an experiment. It should be understood that the experiment Beatrice suggests is to take place on earth, not, as some recent critics suppose, in the moon.

89–90. just as color returns . . . hidden behind it: Color being, in the Aristotelian theory of vision, the visible as such. Lead was the normal backing for mirrors.

94–105. From this objection . . . equally bright there: The imagined experiment with three mirrors, which seems to be Dante's invention, has recently been attacked as physically impossible, since the light behind the experimenter would be blocked. The objection is trivial, since adjustments in the height of the light and the angles of the mirrors would easily eliminate the difficulty. Experiments with mirrors had been known since Antiquity, and in the Middle Ages the learned were familiar with Plato's discussion of mirrors in *Timaeus* 46 and Calcidius's commentary on it (§241), which explains the necessity of adjusting mirrors obliquely in experiments. But if it had ever actually been tried, the expectations of the experimenter would certainly have determined his or her observations (on this tendency, prevalent well into the seventeenth century, see Butterfield 1950); only the development of exact concepts and precise instrumentation would eventually make a reliable result possible (it would refute Beatrice's argument: the farther mirror would provide fewer *lumina* than the nearer ones). In his note on this passage, Hollander gives useful bibliography (Hollander and Hollander 2007).

106–48. Now, as under the blows . . . the dark and the bright: Beatrice's exposition of the true cause of the moon spots, one of the most magnificent passages in the poem, with an elaborate introduction (lines 106–11) and emphatic inner transition (lines 124–26), presents a complete astrological cosmology. God's creative power is *transmitted downward*, increasingly diversified, through the heavenly spheres governed by the angelic intelligences (the "movers"). The passage is thus itself a little model of the cosmos. In the microcosmic *Paradiso*, the pilgrim and Beatrice are of course ascending (like reflected beams of light, 1.49–54), and the *ascent* involves increasing understanding of the *descent* of causality (see Additional Note 13). Boethius' "O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas" (see text, translation, and notes, pp. 686–94), an important influence on Dante's conception of poetic form, as well as on his cosmological thinking from the *Vita nova* onward, suggested many details here.

106–11. Now, as under the blows . . . when you see it: The dissipation of the pilgrim's error is compared to the melting of snow in the rays of the sun—Beatrice's words bring *light*; the "subject of snow" is, of course, water (its "subject," what underlies it: cf. the note to lines 61–62: moon versus sun); for error as rigidified water, cf. *Purg.* 33.67–68, with note (the image also recurs in *Par.* 33.64 for the loss of the content of the final vision). The Aristotelian notion of change as involving the destruction of an earlier form and the imposition of a new one is involved here: note the strong sense of "*in*form," line 110: this is the terminology of the influence of the heavenly bodies, the model for Dante of all forms of causality; in its effect on the pilgrim, Beatrice's explanation is an analogue of creation (Additional Note 13). Note the parallel of Beatrice's reference to the "blows" of the sun with the reference to the heavenly spheres as like the smith's "hammer" (lines 127–29). The cycle of the metamorphoses of water is the basis of the microcosmic *petrosa* "Amor, tu vedi ben che questa donna"; see the note to lines 143–45 below.

112–48. Within the Heaven . . . the dark and the bright: Beatrice's explanation has two clearly demarcated parts: a first part (lines 112–23) that gives a general view of the relation among the various celestial spheres, in descending order; and a second part (lines 127–48) that expounds the subordination of the physical spheres to the angelic intelligences and attributes the moon spots to the formal causality of the intelligence governing the moon. The passage introduces two important analogies with human life, not without ambiguities that have puzzled commentators. (For the relation of this and other passages

to Neoplatonic emanationism, whose terminology Dante often echoes, see Additional Note 11.)

112–23. Within the Heaven . . . fashion below: The heavenly spheres, regarded as the direct cause of sublunar change.

112–14. Within the Heaven . . . all that it contains: The "Heaven of God's peace" is the Empyrean (entered in Canto 30), beyond space and time, identified by Beatrice as located in "the mind of God" (27.109–11). Within it, the eight concentric spheres of the stars and the planets, contained within the outer *primum mobile* [first moveable thing], revolve about the stationary earth.

113. under whose power . . . it contains: If 29.10–36 is taken as governing the sense of this passage, these lines do not state that the *primum mobile* brings the celestial spheres within it into existence; that would be the Proclan or Avicennan emanationist position. The strict meaning can apply only to the sublunar formation of elemented things (and thus not to human souls); but it would have a determining influence over the effects produced by the other spheres.

115–17. The next heaven . . . contained by it: Next is the sphere of the fixed stars (the "so many sights"), by which God's undifferentiated creative power, transmitted by the *primum mobile*, is diversified. The "different essences" (line 116) are those of the several stars. In Albertus Magnus's and Aquinas's adaptation of Neoplatonic ideas, the generic nature of visible light having been created on the first day (Gen. 1.3), the firmament and the luminaries later (Gen. 1.6–19), they must have different essences (cf. the note to lines 56–60 and Litt 1963).

117. separated . . . yet contained by it: This idea goes back to Plotinus's analysis of the stages of the emergence of multiplicity from the transcendent One: the first stage is that of Mind (*noûs*), whose unity contains the Ideas of all existing things.

118–20. The other spheres . . . to their sowings: There has been some confusion among the commentators as to whether "the distinctions held within them" originate in the individual spheres or are received from above; on the basis of 29.10–36 we understand the former. The "differences" of line 118 are probably to be taken as referring to the changing relative positions of the planets. Another source of confusion has been the referent of "their" (used

twice in line 120): is the antecedent the *spheres* or the *distinctions*? We hold the latter view: the various effects on the sublunar of each sphere are *sown* in such a way as to reach intended goals (*ends*).

121–23. These organs . . . fashion below: A summary of the previous nine lines. Dante's use of the term *organs* (referring to the celestial spheres) would seem to imply the analogy with the human body (explicit in lines 133–44); many commentators limit its meaning to that of its etymon, Gr. *órganon* [instrument]; see the notes to lines 127–48, 133–38.

124–26. Now pay attention . . . ford alone: An emphatic transition to the most important idea to which the entire passage has led (parallel to lines 106–11, the general introduction to the *confirmatio*).

126. to hold to the ford alone: The text gives literally "to hold the ford alone." The commentators agree that the idea here is "to complete the proof yourself," but they do not explain his mode of expression; we believe that his meaning is "to keep to the shallow water," where crossing is possible. *To hold the ford*, however, is capable of other meanings, including military ones, for instance, "to defend this truth against opponents."

127–48. The motion . . . and the bright: Beginning once again with the most general metaphysical principle and the highest visible heavenly bodies (the fixed stars), Beatrice introduces the angelic intelligences, in a passage that, like the metaphor of *organs* (line 121), describes the relation of the angels to their spheres as analogous to that of soul to body in human beings. These are very deep waters: both ideas were included in 1277 by Etienne Templier, the bishop of Paris, in his list of condemned doctrines (numbers 102 and 189): "That the [angelic] intelligence is the soul of its heaven and that the heavenly spheres are not the instruments of the intelligences but their organs, as the ear and the eye are organs of the sensory faculty"; and "That since the [angelic] intelligence is full of forms it imprints those forms on [sublunar] matter through the heavenly bodies as if by its instruments" (quoted in Denifle and Châtelain 1889–97). How seriously Dante intended these analogies to be taken is not clear (see 19.10–36, with notes); they are, however, deeply embedded in his metaphorics.

127–32. The motion . . . acts as its seal: The analogy between God's art (Nature, acting through the spheres and the intelligences) and human art (cf. *Inf.* 11.97–111) was widespread in the Middle Ages and is fundamental to Dante's poetry from the *Vita nova* and the *rime petrose* onward.

127–29. The motion . . . from the smith: In these lines the heavenly sphere, whose power is governed and applied to the sublunar by the angelic intelligence, is like a hammer in the hands of a smith who possesses the knowledge and acquired skill of his art. One should note that a hammer, as a shaped object, is itself, like each heavenly sphere (see 29.35–36), a unity of form and matter.

130–32. and the heaven . . . acts as its seal: The "profound mind" of the sphere of the fixed stars ("so many sights") is the angelic mind governing it; from the angelic intelligence comes the form [image] imprinted, as if by a seal, in sublunar matter by the influence of the sphere (see the note to lines 127–48). As has often been noted, like lines 133–38, these lines closely echo Boethius' "O qui perpetua" (see the note to lines 106–48, above, and the notes to "O qui perpetua" lines 13–17).

133–48. And just as the soul . . . and the bright: The analogy with the human body, derived from Boethius, is adapted by Dante to the angels and their heavens, rather than to the World Soul. Lines 133–41 state it in general terms, while lines 142–48 apply the analogy to the moon spots. Except for Nardi 1967a, the commentators tend to minimize Dante's daring here.

133–35. And just as the soul . . . different faculties: Compare Boethius' "O qui perpetua," lines 13–14: "Conectens animam per consona membra risolvis" [you [God] attach Soul and resolve it through adapted members," echoed in "per . . . membra . . . conformate / . . . si risolve" [resolves itself through members conformed] (lines 134–35; note the parallel of "*con*sona" and "*con*formate"). In both Boethius and Dante, the *resolving* of the soul refers to the differentiation of its powers through the various members.

136–38. so the Intelligence . . . about its unity: The diversification of the power of the Intelligence does not undermine its unity but implies its self-contemplation, as in the definition of the rational soul, which "sé in sé rigira" [turns back into itself] (*Purg.* 25.75), essentially the same idea; cf. Boethius: "In semet reditura meat, mentemque . . . circuit" [(Soul) goes forth to return into itself, circles about Mind]. Note Dante's use of the term *si dispiega* [unfolds itself] in both passages (line 136 and *Purg.* 25.58).

139–41. Each different power . . . it binds itself: Each angelic Intelligence being unique in species (essence), like each heavenly body, the nature of the

union is different in each case. Whether Dante intends a metallurgical analogy in the use of the term *lega* (it can also mean *alliance*, *league*; cf. *Inf.* 30.73–74, with note) is open to question. The striking and daring idea, however, is that the angel is "bound" to its sphere as the soul is implicated in the body. How this could be a metaphor is unclear.

142–48. Because of the happy . . . and the bright: The diversity of the angelic natures and of their degrees of beatitude accounts for the different appearance of the heavenly bodies, including the spots on the moon. The explanation does not explain why there should be any shadow in the light of the moon.

143–45. the mixed power . . . the pupil of a living eye: This vivid analogy is the high point of the entire passage. See *Conv.* 3.8.11: "And what is a smile except a flashing of the delight of the soul, that is, a light appearing externally as it exists within?" For the close relation of this canto with the third *petrosa*, elaborately microcosmic and centered on the analogy between the human eye and the heavenly spheres, as well as on the mutations of water, see Chapter 4 of Durling/Martinez 1990, and Martinez's "Oculus Mundi" in that volume, pp. 224–32.

145–48. From that nature . . . and the bright: "That nature" refers to "the happy nature" of line 142 (the angel), and in calling it a "formal principle," Dante comes very close to asserting that the angels are the *forms* of the heavenly bodies (as in Boethius: "Simili convertit imagine caelum" [curves the heavens to like pattern], but seems excluded here by 29.10–36—see the notes to lines 113 and 127–48 above). Chiavacci Leonardi sees the ambiguities of the Neoplatonic ideas here but attempts to resolve them as merely metaphors; Nardi 1967a takes them quite seriously.

CANTO 3

Quel sol che pria d'amor mi scaldò 'l petto
di bella verità m'avea scoverto,
provando e riprovando, il dolce aspetto,
e io, per confessar corretto e certo
me stesso, tanto quanto si convenne
leva' il capo a proferer più erto.
Ma visïone apparve che ritenne
a sé me tanto stretto, per vedersi,
che di mia confession non mi sovvenne.
Quali per vetri trasparenti e tersi
o ver per acque nitide e tranquille,
non sì profonde che i fondi sien persi,
tornan d'i nostri visi le postille
debili sì che perla in bianca fronte
non vien men forte a le nostre pupille:
tali vid' io più facce a parlar pronte,
per ch' io dentro a l'error contrario corsi
a quel ch' accese amor tra l'omo e 'l fonte.
Sùbito sì com' io di lor m'accorsi,
quelle stimando specchiati sembianti,
per veder di cui fosser li occhi torsi;
e nulla vidi, e ritorsili avanti
dritti nel lume de la dolce guida,
che sorridendo ardea ne li occhi santi.
"Non ti maravigliar perch' io sorrida,"
mi disse, "apresso il tuo püeril coto,
poi sopra 'l vero ancor lo piè non fida
ma te rivolve, come suole, a vòto:
vere sustanze son ciò che tu vedi,
qui rilegate per manco di voto.

CANTO 3

Moon, continued: souls fallen short of vows—Piccarda Donati—no discontent in Heaven—the empress Constance

That sun which first set my breast on fire with
love had uncovered for me, proving and
refuting, the sweet face of lovely truth,
and I, in order to confess myself corrected
and certain, raised my head to speak, as much
as was fitting.
But a vision appeared that so tightly
held me to see it, that I did not remember
my confession.
As through clear and polished glass, or else
through waters pure and tranquil and not so
deep that their bottom is hidden,
the tracings of our faces return so weakly that
a pearl on a white forehead is no fainter to our
sight:
so I saw many faces eager to speak, and I fell
into the error contrary to the one that kindled
love between the man and the fountain.
As soon as I perceived them, thinking them to
be mirrored images, I turned my eyes to see
whose they might be,
and, seeing nothing, I looked ahead again,
straight into the eyes of my sweet guide, who
smiled with holy ardor in her eyes.
"Do not marvel that I smile," she told me, "at
your childish notion, since it does not yet trust
its footing upon the truth,
but turns you about, as usual, uselessly:
these are true substances that you see,
relegated here because of vows not fulfilled.

Però parla con esse e odi e credi,
ché la verace luce che le appaga
da sé non lascia lor torcer li piedi."
E io a l'ombra che parea più vaga
di ragionar drizza'mi, e cominciai
quasi com' uom cui troppa voglia smaga:
"O ben creato spirito, che a' rai
di vita etterna la dolcezza senti
che non gustata non s'intende mai,
grazïoso mi fia se mi contenti
del nome tuo e de la vostra sorte."
Ond' ella, pronta e con occhi ridenti:
"La nostra carità non serra porte
a giusta voglia, se non come quella
che vuol simile a sé tutta sua corte.
I' fui nel mondo vergine sorella,
e, se la mente tua ben sé riguarda,
non mi ti celerà l'esser più bella,
ma riconoscerai ch' i' son Piccarda,
che, posta qui con questi altri beati,
beata sono in la spera più tarda.
Li nostri affetti, che solo infiammati
son nel piacer de lo Spirito Santo,
letizian del suo ordine formati,
e questa sorte, che par giù cotanto,
però n'è data perché fuor negletti
li nostri voti e vòti in alcun canto."
Ond' io a lei: "Ne' mirabili aspetti
vostri risplende non so che divino,
che vi trasmuta da' primi concetti.
Però non fui a rimembrar festino,
ma or m'aiuta ciò che tu mi dici,
sì che raffigurar m'è più latino.
Ma dimmi: voi che siete qui felici,
disiderate voi più alto loco
per più vedere e per più farvi amici?"
Con quelle altr' ombre pria sorrise un poco;
da indi mi rispuose tanto lieta
ch'arder parea d'amor nel primo foco:

Therefore speak with them and hear and believe,
for the true Light that fulfills them does
not let their feet twist away from itself."
And I turned to the shade that seemed most
eager to speak, and I began, almost like one
hampered by too much desire:
"O happily created spirit, who in the rays of
eternal life experience the sweetness that
unless tasted is never understood,
it will be a grace to me if you will content me
with your name and your lot." Then the shade,
readily and with laughing eyes:
"Our charity does not lock its doors to a just
desire, but follows his love who wishes all his
court to be like himself.
In the world I was a virgin sister, and if your
memory searches well within, my being more
beautiful will not hide me from you,
but you will recognize that I am Piccarda,
who, placed here with these other blessèd ones,
am blessèd in the slowest sphere.
Our affections, enflamed solely by the delight
of the Holy Spirit, rejoice to be formed by its
ordering,
and this lot, which seems so humble, is given
to us because our vows were neglected and in
some respect unfulfilled."
And I to her: "In your radiant faces there
shines I know not what of divine, that
transmutes you from what we knew of you before.
Therefore I was not quick to remember, but
now what you say helps me, so that making out
your features comes more easily.
But tell me: you souls who are happy here, do
you desire a higher place so as to see more and
to share more love?"
With those other shades she smiled a little
first; then she replied, so joyous that she
seemed to burn in the first fire of love:

"Frate, la nostra volontà quïeta
virtù di carità, che fa volerne
sol quel ch'avemo e d'altro non ci asseta.
Se disïassimo esser più superne,
foran discordi li nostri disiri
dal voler di colui che qui ne cerne,
che vedrai non capere in questi giri
s' essere in carità è qui *necesse*,
e se la sua natura ben rimiri.
Anzi è formale ad esto beato *esse*
tenersi dentro a la divina voglia,
per ch' una fansi nostre voglie stesse,
sì che, come noi sem di soglia in soglia
per questo regno, a tutto il regno piace,
com' a lo re che 'n suo voler ne 'nvoglia.
E 'n la sua volontade è nostra pace:
ell' è quel mare al qual tutto si move
ciò ch'ella cria o che natura face."
Chiaro mi fu allor come ogne dove
in Cielo è Paradiso, *etsi* la grazia
del sommo ben d'un modo non vi piove.
Ma sì com' elli avvien, s' un cibo sazia
e d'un altro rimane ancor la gola,
che quel si chere e di quel si ringrazia:
così fec' io con atto e con parola,
per apprender da lei qual fu la tela
onde non trasse infino a co la spuola.
"Perfetta vita e alto merto inciela
donna più sù," mi disse, "a la cui norma
nel vostro mondo giù si veste e vela
perché fino al morir si vegghi e dorma
con quello sposo ch'ogne voto accetta
che caritate a suo piacer conforma.
Del mondo, per seguirla, giovinetta
fuggi'mi e nel suo abito mi chiusi,
e promisi la via de la sua setta.
Uomini poi, a mal più ch' a bene usi,
fuor mi rapiron de la dolce chiostra:
Iddio si sa qual poi mia vita fusi.

"Brother, our will is quieted by the power of
charity, which causes us to desire only what we
have and does not make us thirst for anything else.
If we desired to be higher up, our desires
would be discordant with the will of him who
assigns us here,
which you will see is contradictory to these
spheres, if to be in charity is here *necesse*, and
if you consider well its nature.
Indeed, it is constitutive of this blessed *esse*
to stay within God's will, and thus our very wills
become one,
so that how we are arranged from level to level
through this kingdom, delights the entire king-dom,
as well as the King who enamors us of his will.
And in his will is our peace: he is that sea to
which all moves that his will creates or Nature
makes."
It became clear to me then how every *where* in
Heaven is Paradise, *etsi* the grace of the highest
Good does not rain there in a single measure.
But as it happens, if one food satisfies but
hunger for another still remains, that we ask for
the one and give thanks for the other:
so did I, with act and word, to learn from her
what was the weave through which she did not
draw the shuttle to the end.
"Perfect life and high merit enheaven a lady
further up," she said, "according to whose rule, down
in your world, women dress and veil themselves
so that until death they may watch and sleep
with that Bridegroom who accepts every vow
conformed by charity to his pleasure.
To follow her, I fled the world when a girl, and
enclosed myself in her habit, and promised to
follow the path of her sect.
Later, men more used to evil than to good
tore me out of the sweet cloister: God alone
knows what my life was after that.

E quest' altro splendor che ti si mostra
da la mia destra parte e che s'accende
di tutto il lume de la spera nostra,
ciò ch' io dico di me, di sé intende:
sorella fu, e così le fu tolta
di capo l'ombra de le sacre bende.
Ma poi che pur al mondo fu rivolta
contra suo grado e contra buona usanza,
non fu dal vel del cor già mai disciolta.
Quest' è la luce de la gran Costanza
che del secondo vento di Soave
generò 'l terzo e l'ultima possanza."
Così parlommi, e poi cominciò "*Ave*
Maria" cantando, e cantando vanio
come per acqua cupa cosa grave.
La vista mia, che tanto lei seguio
quanto possibil fu, poi che la perse
volsesi al segno di maggior disio,
e a Beatrice tutta si converse;
ma quella folgorò nel mio sguardo
sì che da prima il viso non sofferse,
e ciò mi fece a dimandar più tardo.

And this other splendor who appears to you at
my right side and who is burning with all the light
of our sphere,
what I say of myself she understands of
herself: she was a sister, and in the same way the
shade of the holy fillets was torn from her head.
But still, after she had been turned back to the
world against her liking and against good custom,
she was never loosed from the veil upon her heart.
This is the light of the great Constance who
by the second wind of Swabia generated its third
and last power."
Thus she spoke to me, and then she began
singing "*Ave Maria*," and singing she vanished,
like a heavy thing into deep water.
My sight, which followed her as long as
possible, when it lost her turned to the target of
greater desire,
turned altogether to Beatrice; but she flashed
so brightly in my gaze that at first my eyes could
not endure it,
and that made me slower to ask.

NOTES

1–3. That sun . . . lovely truth: This recalls the effect of Beatrice's words at 2.106–11 and evokes Dante's youthful love for Beatrice and its characteristic *stilnovo* imagery (cf. *VN* 1.2). For Beatrice as a sun, see *Purg*. 30.75 and note.

2. proving and refuting: The two parts of the exposition in the previous canto; recalled in inverse order (*hysteron proteron*), a persisting rhetorical figure in *Paradiso* (cf. 2.106–8, 5.91–92, 7.12–14 and notes). See lines 7–31, 121–23, with notes.

5. raised my head to speak: As do those who receive the "bread of the angels" at 2.10 (see note); in the following exchange Beatrice again personifies Wisdom. The gesture might suggest the pilgrim is in the body, but see the note to 2.37–45.

7–31. But a vision . . . away from itself: The pilgrim's first sight of souls in the heaven of the moon adopts the language of optical reflection already seen in the previous canto, this time with allusion to a tale by Ovid (lines 7–18). The "but" that registers the interruption of the pilgrim (the first of seven: see lines 28, 49, 64, 91, 115, 128; on this see Stierle in *LDT*) begins a progress through qualification that reflects the pilgrim's own fretful inconstancy (see below), but also his productive doubt (see 4.1–18 with note); this movement begins and ends with repose in the sight of Beatrice (see note to line 127)

10–24. As through clear . . . in her eyes: What Beatrice calls substances the pilgrim reads as "mirrored images," mistaking what is in front for what is behind ("turns you about"; cf. 2.121–23); this is the disorientation of the undiscerning (see *DVE* 1.1.1, *Conv*. 1.11.3–8). In this instance of *hysteron proteron*, the pilgrim's error prepares Beatrice's account of the structure of Heaven in 4.28–48 (see note).

10–15. As through clear . . . to our sight: The simile, representing the faint contrast of the souls against the nacreous background of the "divine pearl" (see 2.33–34, with note), itself evokes the pale visage of the moon (but see 2.31–33, with note) and may hint at the "pearl" of virginity, for this is the sphere of nuns, brides of Christ (the *pudicitiae margarita* is mentioned in the *Legenda Sanctae Clarae*, Chapter 5). The next sphere is also a "pearl," however (6.127).

10–11. As through clear . . . through waters: If the water were deeper, the reflections would be more vivid. Implicit is a cosmic model that posits the heavens as diaphanous (transparent, like glass) and, according to the Bible, as the "waters . . . above the firmament" (Gen. 1.7). That Dante speaks of water (which both reflects and refracts light), clear glass (which refracts it), and polished glass (which primarily reflects it) indicates that he is considering modes for the transmission of light, which manifest the diffusion of divine power through the universe; see *Purg.* 15.22–23, with notes; Durling/Martinez 1990; Freccero 1998.

13–15. the tracings . . . no fainter to our sight: Dante's word, literally "postils" [*postille*], was used for marginal notes or glosses. The word implies that glosses are subsequent [*post*] to the text itself, their cause: thus the pilgrim thinks he sees not the text (the soul), but its gloss or reflection (often written in different ink).

16–18. so I saw . . . the man and the fountain. In referring to the pilgrim's misprision as an "error contrary" (line 17), Dante refers to Ovid's Narcissus, who, having spurned the nymph Echo and earned her curse (see *Par.* 12.13–15), falls in love with his own reflection in the water of a pure spring. Once aware of his impracticable self-love, he wastes away to a flower, though his soul remains fixated on his reflection in the infernal river Styx (*Met.* 3.349–510).

Dante's text follows Ovid's with respect to the heat of Narcissus's love (3.426: "With love he kindles [*accendet*] and burns," see line 18) but imitates most closely the idea of confusing reflection and reality (3.417: "He loves a bodiless hope, takes to be a body what is but water"). Narcissus inverts the pilgrim's error:

> Simple boy, why vainly try to seize a fleeting image?
> What you see is nowhere; what you love (turn away!) you lose!
> This reflected image [*repercussae . . . imaginis*] that you see
> is but a shadow [*umbra*] . . . (*Met.* 3.432–34).

Dante alludes frequently to Narcissus, but he is named only at *Inf.* 30.128 (see note and Durling 1981a); see also *Purg.* 9.94–96, with note; 29.67–69 and 30.76–99, with notes (and see Picone 1977, Brownlee 1978, Shoaf 1983).

17. error: This is Ovid's term for Narcissus's mistake (*Met.* 3.431: "the one deceived incites the mistake [*error*]"; see also 3.447). Medieval moralized versions of the myth view Narcissus as deceived by transitory beauty ("the false mirror of this world," *Ovide Moralisé* 3.1909), and similar moralizing attends the myth in courtly lyric and narrative, where Narcissus's obsession with an

image is taken as the lover's capture by desire for the dangerous and elusive but socially highly valued courtly lady. See *RR* 1609 and Goldin 1967.

19–24. As soon as I perceived . . . holy ardor in her eyes. The pilgrim's turning of his eyes echoes the warning in Ovid's text (see 3.433, cited in note to lines 16–18), but inverts its outcome: Narcissus sees his own eyes as a pair of stars (3.420); the pilgrim, looking back from the nullity of his error, sees Beatrice's eyes. In *Purgatorio* Beatrice's eyes were emeralds, reflecting the gryphon, an image of the two natures in Christ, whose contemplation is the goal of the journey (see *Purg*. 31.115–23, with notes). Since in *Paradiso* looking into Beatrice's eyes triggers ascent to the next level (14.79–84, 18.52–69, 21.1–3, 22.154, etc.), the heavens are in a sense entered through Beatrice's eyes, and contained in them (compare *RR* 1520–1620); see Additional Note 1.

20. mirrored images. Use of the mirror for mythic and metaphysical purposes in this canto takes up implications of the physical mirrors postulated in 2.97–99, which are themselves a cosmological model (see 2.115–17, 2.130–32 and notes, and Miller 1977). The relation of mirrors to the heavenly spheres is implicit: Italian lyric poets refer to Narcissus's watery mirror as a *spera*, a "sphere," because most mirrors were round, as is of course the sun, called *spera* at *Purg*. 15.2 (optical glasses were spherical or lenticular).

The emphasis of love poetry on optics and mirrors, found in the *Roman de la rose* (subtitled *Miroer aus amoreus*, "a mirror for lovers"), and in early Romance lyric, are based on a Platonic-Augustinian interpretation of the mirror (a reflecting medium) or the glass (a transmitting medium), as metaphors for the various approaches to God: approached through the senses through the mirror of creatures (*extra*); by self-knowledge through the mirror of the mind (*intra*); and by contemplative ascent to gaze on the mirror of God himself (*supra*, see 4.10–12, with note; see Miller 1977). That the heavens, and the angelic intelligences that move them, are a chain of mirrors is a key Neoplatonic metaphor for the divine resemblance transmitted through the material world (Macrobius, *Comm*. 1.14).

Mirrors and glasses are evoked at *Purg*. 31.115–23 (see previous note) and at *Par*. 13.58–50, 18.2, 21.16–18, 26.106–8, 28.4–12; 29.143–45 (see note above), 30.85–87 and 109, and 33.115–32.

25–30. Do not marvel . . . vows not fulfilled: Beatrice's adjective *pueril* [childish] in line 26 recalls that Narcissus is a boy [*puer*] (*Met*. 3.413).

The pilgrim's "childish thought" and his pointless turning echoes Narcissus's desire for an illusion (Dante's expression is *a vòto*, playing on the word for a

vow, *voto*). In this case, Beatrice claims, the image is a "true substance": but this appears misleading in light of her words at 4.28–36 (see note); given that the souls are "truly present" only in the Empyrean, their images here might well be described as "mirror images." For the interpretive trap here, see Introduction, p. 17, and note to 28.4–10.

28. as usual: Beatrice's reproach seems to nullify the pilgrim's progress to this point. Compare *Purg.* 33.67–75. See *Par.* 5.4–6 and 7.19–21, with notes; he is also representing typical human limitations, however.

29–30. relegated here because of vows not fulfilled: Failure to maintain a vow of chastity or obedience is a species of infidelity (see *ST* 2a 2ae q. 88 a. 3, citing Eccl. 5.3–4; see 5.67–69 and note). Dante places some souls who, because in life they were inconstant (moon), overattached to earthly fame (Mercury), or overfond of sexual love (Venus), (see Carroll) in the first three planets traversed by the pilgrim. See also 7.146, 9.32–33 and notes.

31–130. Therefore speak . . . slower to ask: The remainder of the canto is devoted to the interview with Piccarda Donati, not named until line 49, in life a nun in the order of Poor Clares. With another nun introduced later, she represents souls in the lowest and "slowest sphere" (51), the place for those who did not maintain vows to adhere to the religious life (lines 55–57). After declaring she was a nun (46–49), Piccarda explains her placement in the moon (64–90), and alludes to the vicissitudes of her earthly lot (103–8), after which she introduces her companion (109–20). Shakespeare referred to "th' inconstant moon" because of its rapid alterations of phase; astrologers understood the moon to influence those inclined to the religious life, including founders of orders, as well as those weak of will (Bonatti in Kay 1994; see 4.79–87, with notes). For examples of constancy of will, see 4.83–84, with note.

34–63. And I turned . . . comes more easily: Piccarda Donati was sister to Forese Donati, the close friend Dante speaks with among the gluttonous in *Purg.* 23–24, and to Corso Donati, leader of the Florentine Black Guelphs, the enemies of Dante's party. Corso's conspiracy with Boniface VIII and Charles of Valois led directly to Dante's exile in 1302 (see *Purg.* 24.82–87 and note). The Donati lived next door to the Alighieri in the parish of San Martino del Vescovo in Florence, and Dante's wife, Gemma Donati, came from a branch of the same family.

37–39. O happily created spirit . . . never understood: Dante's address of Piccarda recalls Francesca's reception of the pilgrim in *Inferno* Canto 5 and the language of *stilnovo* poetry (for line 39 compare Dante's sonnet "Tanto gentile," line 11: "Non l'intende chi non la prova" [he does not understand who does not experience it]), which in turn derives from scriptural and liturgical language (cf. Ps. 33.9, "O taste and see"; Apoc. 2.17, "No man knoweth, but he that receiveth it") (Chiavacci Leonardi).

41. your lot: The pilgrim uses the plural here, asking about all those in the sphere of the moon; Piccarda will continue to generalize about all the souls in the moon (52–57) and all those in Heaven (70–87).

43–45. Our charity . . . to be like himself: Note the reference to divine exemplarity and resemblance, also implicit in the Narcissus episode. The image of a locked door suits a cloistered nun, but there is an underlying reference to virginity, rendered moot by the ardor of spiritual love (for the erotic implications in opening a door, see *Par*. 11.59–60 and note).

45. all his court: All the blessed; the treatment of Heaven as a court is inevitable in feudal cultures, but is also suited to echoes of *stilnovo* poetic language in the canto; at *DVE* 1.18–19 Dante argues that the Italian "court" exists only in the works of the poets who write in the illustrious vernacular (Guinizelli and Dante chief among them; see *Purg*. 26.112–14, with note); see also 7.91 and 115, with notes.

48. my being more beautiful will not hide me from you: Piccarda's facial features are fully visible to the pilgrim; in the next sphere, discernible features begin to be hidden (see 5.124–26); thereafter, features are no longer visible, until the Empyrean is entered (see notes to 4.28–39, 30.43–45).

51. slowest sphere: In reference *not* to the moon's rapid proper motion in the zodiac, which returns it to its original phase in twenty-eight days, but to the moon's daily revolution with the celestial sphere; since the moon's orbit is nearest the earth, it has the smallest circumference, thus the moon covers the least distance in twenty-four hours and is the slowest of the planets. The speed at which the spheres turn is correlated to the rank of the angelic intelligences governing them; see 2.121–23, 28.16–45, with notes.

52–54. Our affections . . . formed by its ordering: Piccarda's language unites the subjective experience of charity with the objective "form" of cosmic order; joy results from the concord of the two; see note to 64–90 below.

56–57. because our vows . . . in some respect unfulfilled: Though taken from the cloister through violence, Piccarda fell short of her vow because she did not risk harm or death to return; see 4.73–90, with note. Dante's Italian includes a pun on religious vows [*voti*], which, if unfulfilled, are "empty" [*vuoti*, here *vòti*]; see note to lines 25–30, where the pun is in the rhyme words, and 4.26–26, with note.

The emphasis on vows, or acts that bind the will, informs the four cantos in the heaven of the moon. Aquinas asserted that every vow [*votum*] entails an act of will [*voluntas*] (see *ST* 2a 2ae q. 88 a. 2), and there are nine references to the will or willing in this canto alone (lines 36, 44, 73, 80, 81, twice in 84, 85, and 126; and see 4.45–26, 82–88). Developing themes from this canto, Cantos 6 and 7 take up the voluntary acts of God and mankind.

58–63. And I to her . . . comes more easily: The pilgrim's slow recognition of Piccarda and her appeal to his memory recall how her brother Forese was unrecognizable to the pilgrim because of his fasting (*Purg.* 23.40–48, with notes), but identifiable because of his voice.

64–90. But tell me . . . in a single measure: Piccarda states that the souls in the moon wish no higher place because their location conforms to God's judgment regarding their deserts; dissent from his will would be a dissonance in the harmony of Paradise, a concord that is itself the form or essential nature of Heaven, charity. See especially lines 43–45, 52–54, and 85–87, and cf. *Mon.* 2.2.4–6. This is the doctrinal heart of the canto; as in 2.112–48, the enlightenment of the pilgrim requires an explanation of the logic governing all Heaven.

67–69. With those other shades . . . first fire of love: Piccarda's joyful response emerges from a chorus of delight as all the spirits smile; most commentators take it to mean that she glows with the reflected charity of the Empyrean, or of God; but in the context of sublimated *stilnovo* eroticism, an evocation of first love would not be out of place (see also lines 39, 48, and 52, with notes).

67. shades: Only here and at 5.107 are souls in Heaven referred to as "shades" [*ombre*]; for a possible explanation, see 9.118–19 and note.

70. Brother: This address was first used in *Purgatorio* to address the wayfarer (*Purg.* 4.127, 11.82, 13.94), where it established his status as a fellow pilgrim, and by Beatrice in *Purg.* 33.23, suggesting his spiritual maturation at the end of Purgatory, where it includes an element of correction (Havely 2004).

73–81. If we desired . . . our very wills become one: For Piccarda, any deviation from charity would be a contradiction of the order of the planets themselves. The force of Dante's use of the verb "to fit" [*capere*], etymologically "to be contained by," at line 76, is that the physical order of creation, the concord of wills *within* God's will (line 80; note the spatial meaning of the preposition), and the diffusion of charity (the action of the Holy Spirit; see lines 52–54), are facets of one reality. This is one key to Dante's conception of his heavens, consistent with the expositions of 1.100–26 (especially 103–5) and 2.64–148 (see notes). For the importance of containment to Piccarda's history and destiny, see notes to lines 103–8, 114, 115–17, and Additional Note 5.

77, 79: *necesse, esse*: Latin *Necesse* means logical necessity, and *esse* designates being; note also *etsi* [although] in line 89; cf. *Mon*. 1.14.11. The fusion of a "sweet" lyrical poetic style with the philosophical terminology of the schools was one of the successes of Dante's *stilnovo* phase (see *Purg*. 26.91–132, with notes, and note to 5.1–9), and remains in force in *Paradiso*.

85. And in his will is our peace: Cf. Eph. 2.14, "He himself is our peace" [*ipse enim est pax nostra*], and Luke 2.14 ("Peace to men of good will"). Desire is satisfied only when the individual will is conformed to God's; see again Augustine's formula, implicit in lines 70–71 (also 1.109–14 and 2.19, with notes). Five words pertinent to the will are used within a few terzinas of line 85 (lines 80–81, 84, 85), which voices a rule valid for all Heaven (see note to lines 56–57).

86–87. he is that sea . . . Nature makes: At 1.113, creatures are envisioned crossing the sea of being to reach their rest; here God himself is the sea toward which all things naturally move. Cf. *Inf*. 5.97–99, *Purg*. 5.109–23 and notes, and also *Par*. 9.46–48, 82–84, with notes. The metaphor attenuates the importance of distinctions of rank, preparing the assertion of the next two lines.

88–90. It became clear . . . in a single measure: God does not shed his grace equally on all, but the law of charity, by erasing all repining, makes of Heaven a community united in conformity to a single will. See *ST* Suppl. q. 93 a. 2, on the "many mansions" of Heaven. Cf. 19.7–12, with note; also *Mon*. 1.15.5, 1.16.5.

91–108. But as it happens . . . after that: Piccarda relates how she vowed obedience to the rule of the Poor Clares and left the world, but, as contemporary sources recount, was compelled by her brother Corso to marry Rossellino della Tosa, a leader of the Black Guelphs and a bitter enemy of Dante's party;

how Rossellino and Corso plotted the Black Guelph coup d'état of 1301–2 is related in the Florentine history of Dino Compagni (*Cronica* 3.2, 8). If Piccarda was forced into marriage when Corso was *podestà* of Bologna, it would have occurred between 1283 and 1293 (Sapegno 1958).

91–96. But as it happens . . . shuttle to the end: The pilgrim, launched on another question with another "but" (see line 64), is compared to a fickle eater, while Piccarda's account of her inconstancy is formulated in terms of weaving, typical female work in Florentine families of all classes; see *Par*. 15.115–26 and note.

97–102. Perfect life . . . to his pleasure: Piccarda refers to Clare Scifi (1194–1253) who founded the Poor Clares in 1212 in her zeal to imitate the poverty and humility of Francis of Assisi (see 11.76–84 and notes). According to the *Legenda Sanctae Clarae* attributed to Thomas of Celano (see 11.43–117 and note), Clare fled from her aristocratic household to receive the tonsure from Francis himself (Chapters 7–9). Facing down threats of violence from her family, she persuaded her sister Agnes to join her new order, exemplifying the strength of will that nuns here in the moon lacked in life (Chapters 24–25). Dante's account of the nun's connubial life with Christ is also consistent with the language of the Canticle of Canticles used in the biography to describe Clare's relationship to Christ (Chapter 6), continuing the theme of sacred desire pervading the canto, and indeed much of *Paradiso* (see 10.139–44, 11.58–75, with notes, and Additional Note 4).

103–8. To follow her . . . after that: As in her references to the habit of her order (lines 99, 114, 117), Piccarda treats her habit as an enclosure, like the cloister (see line 43). Piccarda speaks of Clare as "enheavened" [*inciela*] by her merits, a bold coinage related to *imparadise*, used of Beatrice (*Par*. 28.3, 4.28, and 9.73–81, with notes); such uses make the cosmos a kind of conventual enclosure. See notes to lines 73–81, 114, 115–17, and Additional Note 5.

106–8. Later men more used to evil . . . after that: Piccarda veils the sorrows of her married life, as did Francesca (*Inf*. 5.138, with note) and la Pia (cf. *Purg*. 5.133–36, with note). The three women bear comparison with one another; all three are *mal mariées* (Stefanini 1992a), their lives marred by male violence, and vows of marriage, secular or spiritual, are at stake in each case (see notes to lines 37–38, 86–87, 91–108, and 121–23).

109–30. And this other splendor . . . slower to ask: Piccarda introduces her companion, Constance of Hauteville (1154–98), daughter to Roger II, king of

Naples and Sicily. When Constance's uncle, King William the Good, died without offspring, she became the sole legitimate heir of the Norman royal house of Hauteville. At Frederick Barbarossa's instigation, she was contracted in marriage in 1185 to his son, Henry of Hohenstaufen, in order to unite the Norman inheritance with the Holy Roman Empire, and to counter the claims of her nephew, the bastard Tancred of Lecce, whom Pope Clement III favored in order to save the Church from encirclement by a unified Ghibelline power. Constance gave birth in 1195 to Frederick, the future Frederick II (*Inf*. 10.119, with note). According to Guelph accounts, Constance was over fifty years old when she was taken from the cloister, and thus had borne Frederick when past childbearing age, a feat judged demonic. Dante accepts the legend but inverts its defamatory thrust (for a similar revision of a slandered reputation, compare Manfred, Constance's grandson, *Purg*. 3.112–17, with notes). Constance was in fact never a nun and was married to Henry at age 31, an advanced age for the day; she gave birth to Frederick at age 41. After Henry VI died in 1196, Constance was empress regent until her death.

111. burning with all the light of our sphere: Piccarda indicates that Constance holds a higher place within the sphere of the moon, and implies there are differentiations of rank within each of the spheres; see 9.118–25 and note.

112. what I say of myself she understands of herself: An instance of mutual transparency among the blessed, or perhaps the social leveling prescribed among religious, here sharpened by the shared condition of the two women, both nuns forced from the cloister.

114. the shade of the holy fillets: The wimple (headband) enclosed the head, and identified the nun as a bride of Christ (secular married women wore white wimples rather than black; see *Purg*. 8.73–75, with notes).

115–17. But still . . . the veil upon her heart: Costance's vow never ceased to bind her will, and Piccarda implies this is also her own condition (line 112). A veiled heart is of course enclosed. The indirectness of Piccarda's assertion may render Dante's impression of the reticence of nuns in general.

118–20. This is the light . . . third and last power: Leaving Clare unnamed (although lines 109–11 hint at her name, whose relation to *claritas* [illustriousness] is emphasized in her biography), Piccarda names Constance, whose name is clearly significant in this canto of the inconstant, as it was when mentioned by Manfred in *Purg*. 3.113; a late commentary alleges Piccarda's name as a nun was also Constance. Henry VI, Constance's husband, and her son, the

future Frederick II, are evoked by the periphrastic "wind of Swabia," referring to Hohenstaufen feudal holdings; "wind" suggests the strong, but sporadic force of their imperial authority in Italian politics (the first such "wind" was Frederick Barbarossa, the father of Henry VI). See note to 17.133–42, and compare the arrival of the *messo* at *Inf*. 9.64–72, with note.

121–23. Thus she spoke . . . heavy thing into deep water: Piccarda seems to sink into the watery body of the moon. The metrical stresses in line 123 recall those of *Inf*. 5.145, where the pilgrim falls "as a dead body falls."

122. *Ave Maria* [Hail, Mary]**:** Based on the Annunciation (Luke 1.28–30), this is one of the prayers medieval Catholics were required to know by heart (see 23.94–111 and 32.94–96, with notes; also *Purg*. 10.40 and note). As he had done with Beatrice at *VN* 28.1 and 34.7, Dante enlists a virtuous woman under the banner of Mary. Since Piccarda returns to the Empyrean (see 4.28–39 and note), she reenters Mary's presence, and her *ave* is a real greeting. Piccarda says hello, but Echo's last word to the dying Narcissus is the opposed-in-meaning but assonant *vale* ("goodbye").

127. turned altogether to Beatrice: The repeated turn back from "emptiness" in lines 25–28 makes the whole canto a series of turns away from and back to Beatrice—another pattern for *Paradiso* as a whole (or nearly; cf. 31.79–90 and note).

CANTO 4

Intra due cibi, distanti e moventi
d'un modo, prima si morria di fame
che liber' omo l'un recasse ai denti;
sì si starebbe un agno intra due brame
di fieri lupi, igualmente temendo,
sì si starebbe un cane intra due dame:
per che, s' i' mi tacea, me non riprendo,
da li miei dubbi d'un modo sospinto,
poi ch' era necessario, né commendo.
Io mi tacea, ma 'l mio disir dipinto
m'era nel viso e 'l dimandar con ello,
più caldo assai che per parlar distinto.
Fé sì Beatrice qual fé Danïello,
Nabuccodonosor levando d'ira
che l'avea fatto ingiustamente fello,
e disse: "Io veggio ben come ti tira
uno e altro disio sì che tua cura
sé stessa lega sì che fuor non spira.
Tu argomenti: 'Se 'l buon voler dura,
la vïolenza altrui per qual ragione
di meritar mi scema la misura?'
Ancor di dubitar ti dà cagione
parer tornarsi l'anime a le stelle,
secondo la sentenza di Platone.
Queste son le question che nel tuo *velle*
pontano igualmente; e però pria
tratterò quella che più ha di felle.
D'i Serafin colui che più s'india,
Moïsè, Samuel, e quel Giovanni
che prender vuoli, io dico, non Maria,

CANTO 4

Moon, continued: the pilgrim's doubts—Beatrice's answers: souls merely appear here; form and matter in vows; conditioned and absolute will

Between two foods, equally distant and
attractive, a free man would die of hunger
before he brought either to his teeth;
so a lamb would stand between two hungers
of fierce wolves, fearing both equally, so a
hound between two does:
therefore if I was silent, urged in equal measure
by my two doubts, I do not reproach myself,
since it was necessary, nor do I commend myself.
I was silent, but my desire was depicted on
my face and my questions with it, much more
warmly than if articulated in speech.
Beatrice did as Daniel did, when
he soothed Nebuchadnezzar's unjustly
cruel anger,
and said: "I see well how each of your two
desires draws you, so that your concern binds
itself and does not speak.
You argue: 'If my good will persists, by what
accounting does another's violence lessen the
measure of my deserving?'
Another cause of doubt for you is that the
souls seem to have returned to the stars, in
accord with Plato's opinion.
These are the questions that weigh equally in
your *velle*; and therefore I will treat first the one
that contains more poison.
That one among the Seraphim that most
engods itself, Moses, Samuel, and whichever
John you choose, all—even Mary, I say—

non hanno in altro cielo i loro scanni
che questi spirti che mo t'appariro,
né hanno a l'esser lor più o meno anni,
ma tutti fanno bello il primo giro,
e differentemente han dolce vita
per sentir più e men l'etterno Spiro.
Qui si mostraro, non perché sortita
sia questa spera lor, ma per far segno
de la celestïal c' ha men salita.
osì parlar conviensi al vostro ingegno,
però che solo da sensato apprende
ciò che fa poscia d'intelletto degno.
Per questo la Scrittura condescende
a vostra facultate, e piedi e mano
attribuisce a Dio, e altro intende,
e santa Chiesa con aspetto umano
Gabrïel e Michel vi rappresenta,
e l'altro che Tobia rifece sano.
Quel che Timeo de l'anime argomenta
non è simile a ciò che qui si vede,
però che come dice par che senta.
Dice che l'alma a la sua stella riede,
credendo quella quindi esser decisa
quando Natura per forma la diede.
E forse sua sentenza è d'altra guisa
che la voce non suona, ed esser puote
con intenzion da non esser derisa:
s' elli intende tornare a queste ruote
l'onor de la influenza e 'l biasmo, forse
in alcun vero suo arco percuote.
Questo principio, male inteso, torse
già tutto il mondo quasi, sì che Giove,
Mercurio e Marte a nominar trascorse.
L'altra dubitazion che ti commove
ha men velen, però che sua malizia
non ti poria menar da me altrove:
parere ingiusta la nostra giustizia
ne li occhi d'i mortali è argomento
di fede e non d'eretica nequizia.

have their thrones in no different heaven from these spirits who have just appeared to you, nor have they more or fewer years to their being,

but all adorn the first sphere and differingly have blessèd life, in that they feel more and less of the eternal Spirit.

They have shown themselves here, not because this sphere is allotted to them, but to signify the celestial one that is least exalted.

To speak thus to your understanding is necessary, for it takes from sense perception alone what later it makes worthy of intellection.

For this reason Scripture condescends to your faculties, attributing feet and hands to God and meaning something different,

and holy Church represents Gabriel and Michael to you with human shape, and the other one who madeTobias whole.

What Timaeus argues about souls is not similar to what is seen here, since what he says does seem to be his meaning.

He says that the soul returns to its star, believing that it had fallen down from there when Nature gave it to be a form.

And perhaps his opinion is different from what the words seem to express, and it may have a meaning that is not to be scorned:

if he means that honor and blame for their influence returns to these wheels, perhaps his bow strikes some truth.

This principle, ill understood, led almost the whole world astray, so that it erred in naming planets Jove, Mercury, and Mars.

The other doubt that troubles you has less venom, because its malice could not draw you away from me:

that our justice seems unjust to the eyes of mortals is argument of faith and not of wicked heresy.

Ma perché puote vostro accorgimento
ben penetrare a questa veritate,
come disiri, ti farò contento.
Se vïolenza è quando quel che pate
nïente conferisce a quel che sforza,
non fuor quest' alme per essa scusate:
che volontà, se non vuol, non s'ammorza,
ma fa come natura face in foco,
se mille volte vïolenza il torza.
Per che, s'ella si piega assai o poco,
segue la forza, e così queste fero,
possendo rifuggir nel santo loco.
Se fosse stato lor volere intero,
come tenne Lorenzo in su la grada
e fece Muzio a la sua man severo,
così l'avria ripinte per la strada
ond' eran tratte, come fuoro sciolte;
ma così salda voglia è troppo rada.
E per queste parole, se ricolte
l'hai come dei, è l'argomento casso
che t'avria fatto noia ancor più volte.
Ma or ti s'attraversa un altro passo
dinanzi a li occhi, tal che per te stesso
non usciresti: pria saresti lasso.
Io t'ho per certo ne la mente messo
ch' alma beata non poria mentire,
però ch' è sempre al primo Vero appresso,
e poi potesti da Piccarda udire
che l'affezion del vel Costanza tenne,
sì ch' ella par qui meco contradire.
Molte fïate già, frate, addivenne
che, per fuggir periglio, contra grato
si fé di quel che far non si convenne:
come Almeone, che, di ciò pregato
dal padre suo, la propria madre spense,
per non perder pietà si fé spietato.
A questo punto voglio che tu pense
che la forza al voler si mischia, e fanno
sì che scusar non si posson l'offense.

But since your understanding can
penetrate to this truth, as you desire I shall
content you.
If violence is when the one that undergoes it
contributes nothing to what does the forcing,
these souls were not excused by it:
for the will, if it does not will, cannot be
extinguished but does as Nature does in fire,
though violence thwart it a thousand times.
Therefore, if the will bends much or little, it
seconds the force, and so did these souls, though
able to flee again to the holy refuge.
If their will had been entire, like what held
Laurence on the grill or made Mucius harsh
toward his hand,
it would have driven them back up the path
they had been forced to go down, as soon as they
were loosed; but so firm a will is all too rare.
And by these words, if you have received
them as you should, that argument is invalidated
which would have harmed you many times.
But now another obstacle confronts your
eyes, so great that by yourself you would not get
free of it: you would tire first.
I have planted in your mind as a certainty that
a blessèd soul could never lie, because it is
always close to the first Truth,
but yet you heard Piccarda say that
Constance kept her love of the veil, so that she
seems to contradict me here.
Many times has it happened, brother, that in
order to flee danger people have done what
they should not, against their preference:
like Alcmaeon, who, begged by his father,
killed his own mother and, so as not to fail in
piety, became impious.
On this point I wish you to consider that force
can become mixed with the will, so that the offences
cannot be excused.

Voglia assoluta non consente al danno,
ma consentevi in tanto in quanto teme,
se si ritrae, cadere in più affanno.
Però quando Piccarda quello spreme,
de la voglia assoluta intende, e io
de l'altra, sì che ver diciamo insieme."
Cotal fu l'ondeggiar del santo rio
ch' uscì del fonte ond' ogne ver deriva,
tal puose in pace uno e altro disio.
"O amanza del primo amante, o diva,"
diss' io appresso, "il cui parlar m'inonda
e scalda sì che più e più m'avviva,
non è l'affezion mia tanto profonda
che basti a render voi grazia per grazia,
ma quei che vede e puote a ciò risponda.
Io veggio ben che già mai non si sazia
nostro intelletto, se 'l ver non lo illustra
di fuor dal qual nessun vero si spazia;
posasi in esso, come fera in lustra,
tosto che giunto l'ha; e giugner puollo:
se non, ciascun disio sarebbe *frustra*.
Nasce per quello, a guisa di rampollo,
a piè del vero il dubbio, ed è natura
ch' al sommo pinge noi di collo in collo.
Questo m'invita, questo m'assicura
con reverenza, donna, a dimandarvi
d'un'altra verità che m'è oscura.
Io vo' saper se l'uom può sodisfarvi
ai voti manchi sì con altri beni
ch' a la vostra statera non sien parvi."
Beatrice mi guardò con li occhi pieni
di faville d'amor così divini
che, vinta, mia virtute diè le reni,
e quasi mi perdei con li occhi chini.

Absolute will does not consent to the harm,
but conditional will consents in so far as it fears,
if it draws back, to fall into worse trouble.
Therefore when Piccarda speaks thus, she
refers to the absolute will and I to the other; so
that we both speak truly."
Such was the overflowing of the holy stream
that issued from the Fount whence every truth
derives, thus she brought peace to both of my desires.
"O beloved of the first Lover, O divine one," I
said then, "whose speech washes over me and
warms me, giving ever greater life,
my power of feeling is not deep enough to
return you equal grace for grace, but let him
who sees and has the power answer for it.
I see well how our intellect is never satisfied
unless illumined by that Truth outside of which
no truth can range;
there it rests, like a beast in its lair, as soon
as it has reached it; and it can reach it: if not,
every desire would be *frustra*.
Thus doubt is born like a burgeoning at the
foot of truth, and it is our nature that drives us
toward the summit from peak to peak.
This invites me, this gives me assurance,
lady, to ask you with reverence about another
truth that is obscure to me.
I would know if one can so satisfy unfulfilled
vows with other goods that they will not be slight
in your scales."
Beatrice gazed at me with eyes so divine and
full of sparks of love that, overcome, my powers
turned in flight,
and I almost lost myself, with eyes cast down.

NOTES

1–18. Between two foods . . . does not speak: The introduction to this canto of explanations represents the pilgrim as unable to choose which of his doubts to express first. It has occasioned much discussion, most of which has been concerned with the question of the degree of its Averroism (the idea that the will is incapable of choosing between rationally equivalent possibilities smacks of the Averroistic reading of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*. 3.2.1–12; see Nardi 1944, Vanni Rovighi 1971, and Chiavacci Leonardi). But in *Mon.* 1.12.2–6, Dante sets forth the view that freedom of the will is only achieved when judgment alone, unswayed by appetite, determines choice (as in *Purg.* 18.16–75: even if all desires were astrologically caused, reason still has the power to discern and choose the better), and clearly reason would not choose starvation. Thus we believe this passage to be another of Dante's interpretive traps (see Durling 2001a and Durling 2003).

Little attention has been given to the relation of this beginning to the rest of the canto (an exception is Bárberi-Squarotti 1992). Dante's point seems to be that the pilgrim's two doubts are in fact *not* equally important, although he desires their clarification "equally": Beatrice says that one of them has "more venom" than the other (line 27), and could lead away from her (lines 65–67). Thus the canto repeats the process of Cantos 1 to 3, though with greater subtlety and at a higher level, all of which cantos feature the correction of dangerous misconceptions, and at its end the poet defends the heuristic value of doubt as such (lines 130–32; and cf. lines 67–69).

The clarification of the pilgrim's more dangerous doubt (lines 28–63) is also a major statement of a basic principle governing the entire poem (this has been recognized in connection with the narrow question of the location of souls, but not in relation to the poem's entire range of sensory representation; cf. the notes to 2.1–6 and Introduction, pp. 14–17). Warned against misreading in Canto 2, the reader is here being instructed in more than the relation of souls to planets, and the elaborate proem helps emphasize the importance of Beatrice's explanation.

1–9. Between two foods . . . I commend myself: Later in the fourteenth century this problem became known as that of "Buridan's ass," unable to choose between identical and equidistant stacks of hay, named after the noted Parisian professor of logic, Jean Buridan. It is important to note that the pilgrim is caught between his equally strong desire for clarification of two

doubts, i.e., intellectual confusions. That the poet neither blames nor commends his indecision is no doubt to be related to the imperfect state of his understanding at this moment (i.e., not at the time of writing): as well as to the view that doubts, misunderstandings, and even errors are morally neutral in themselves (cf. lines 124–32, with notes).

4–6. so a lamb . . . two does: These antithetical examples seem to be Dante's inventions, although suggested by Ovid (Seneca's *Thyestes* 707–11, sometimes cited as a source, are also derived from this Ovid passage):

> tigris ut auditis diversa valle duorum
> exstimulata fame mugitibus armentorum
> nescit, utro potius ruat, et ruere ardet utroque (*Met.* 5.164–6)
> [as a tiger, hearing in neighboring valleys,
> when frantic with hunger, the lowing of two herds,
> knows not which to attack first, and burns to attack both]

Dante's similes place the "free man" on the same level with the beasts that lack reason (lamb and hound) and with a murderous tyrant, associating the pilgrim with both the victims (the lamb and the does) and the predators (the hound and the wolves): all the threats are mortal, as in lines 13–15. The clearest parallel is with the lamb: the pilgrim misjudges the relative seriousness of his doubts, but both present dangers.

13–114. Beatrice did . . . both speak truly: Reading the pilgrim's thoughts, Beatrice articulates his two doubts in ascending order of seriousness (lines 19–24) and answers them in descending order (lines 25–114). Lines 28–63, then, treat the relation of the blessed souls to the planets in which the pilgrim sees them, and lines 73–114 the question of the blame attached to yielding to violence; lines 25–27 and 64–72 are introductory comments on the relation of questioning and doubt to the possession of true faith; as Beatrice observes in lines 27 and 64–66, error concerning the "true" location of souls could undermine faith.

13–15. Beatrice did . . . cruel anger: In Daniel 2, the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, has a dream that disturbs him, but which he forgets; when his soothsayers can neither divine his dream nor, of course, interpret it, he furiously orders all his "wise men" to be put to death, including Daniel. Inspired by a divinely sent dream of his own, however, Daniel interprets the dream, saves many lives, and becomes the king's favorite. (The king's dream is the basis of the Old Man of Crete; see *Inf.* 14.94–120 and *Inferno* Additional

Note 3; in *Epistle* 13.8 Dante cites it as an instance of prophetic vision granted to the unworthy). For the question of the *Comedy* as dream, see Introduction, pp. 17–18. The parallel with Nebuchadnezzar (cf. the note to lines 4–6) is disturbing (intellectual error can have serious consequences if not corrected), but the emphasis here is on its resolution.

21. the measure of my deserving: Beatrice is speaking of "merit" (*meritare* [deserving]) as quantifiable, a conception underlying the entire casuistry of vows and penitence, as well as the mainstream doctrine of Purgatory and indulgences (cf. our introduction to *Purgatorio*, pp. 9–10).

25–26. These are the questions . . . in your *velle* [will]**:** The infinitive of Latin *volo*, *velle* [to will, wish], is used by Dante to denote the intellectually determined will (see the note to lines 1–18). This passage and 33.143–45 (see notes there) are the only ones in the poem that employ the term.

28–63. the Seraphim . . . Mercury, and Mars: Beatrice sees that the pilgrim connects the souls met in the moon, said in 3.30 to be "relegated" there for not fulfilling their vows, with Plato's account in *Timaeus* 41–42 (known directly or indirectly) of each soul's preexistence in its star and its return to beatified existence there after living virtuously. The Platonic doctrine might deny the direct creation of human souls by God (see *Purgatorio* 25 and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 11), and it historically strengthened the pagan deification of the planets (lines 61–63). Beatrice's explanation, then, has three parts: (1) the souls' real dwelling, the Empyrean (lines 28–36); (2) the significance of their appearance in the moon (lines 37–48); and (3) the interpretation of Plato's meaning (lines 49–63).

28–36. the Seraphim . . . the eternal Spirit: The souls the pilgrim has just met merely *appeared* in the moon, for all the blessed—even the Seraphim (the highest order of angels) and the greatest prophets and saints, including saint John the Baptist, saint John the Evangelist, and even the Virgin—are enthroned in the "first heaven," the Empyrean, and all equally share eternal life (the mention of "more or fewer years" may serve to dissociate the souls from the differing periods of revolution of the planets); the Empyrean, of course, is beyond both time and space (see the note to 2.112–14). The notion of some commentators that the souls are equally happy is of course mistaken, since souls feel the love and joy of the Holy Spirit in different degrees (lines 35–36; cf. 14.37–51, with notes).

Beatrice's explanation of the appearance to the pilgrim's imagination of the faces of Piccarda and Costanza in the moon as "showings" has far-reaching

implications for the semiology of the "*alta fantasia*" [high imagining] (33.140) of the entire journey. All the sensory images in the poem, of Beatrice's beauty, of souls in the planets or the Empyrean (they do not have bodies), of the planets themselves, of the vision of the godhead, are here acknowledged to be the poet's means of "speaking to" the reader's imagination, and it is the reader's responsibility to make them "*d'intelletto degno*" [worthy of intellection] (line 42; see Introduction, pp. 8–10).

It is not, however, the case that Beatrice's statement implies that the appearances of souls in planets do not "aim at any reality, even imaginary, beyond [themselves]" (Freccero 1968); as Beatrice observes, in the moon they "*signify* the celestial [level that is least exalted]" (lines 38–39; italics added), and, as she will imply in lines 58–60, both here and in other planets they also signify the importance of astrological influences.

28. That one . . . that most engods itself: The Seraph whose vision penetrates most deeply into God (for the idea, see 21.92). This daring coinage of Dante's, *indiarsi* [*in*+*dio*+*are*—the first conjugation is normally used for coined verbs—plus the reflexive pronoun: to engod oneself], which provides the model for many others, like *incielare* [to enheaven] (3.97), continues the series of coinages pushing at the limits of language.

37–48. They have shown . . . made Tobias whole: The souls have appeared in the moon in order to signify their low rank among the blessed (but see the note to lines 58–60); this is a sensory representation of an abstract principle, thus an example of *accommodation*, which Beatrice now explains as the necessity of addressing the human imagination. For the larger semiological implications of this passage, see below, note to lines 40–42.

40–48. To speak thus . . . made Tobias whole: The idea that divine revelation must be adapted—"accommodated"—to human understanding (as Beatrice puts it, it must "condescend to your faculties") is implicit in the Old Testament and fundamental to the New Testament, though seldom stated or generalized. The Scholastics devoted much discussion to the importance of metaphor in the Bible (see the note to lines 44–45), but the topic became a major explicit focus of theology only in modern times (see Leipold Mueller-Schwefe 1978).

40–42. To speak thus . . . worthy of intellection: The view that all human knowledge is ultimately based on sense perception, adopted by Dante also in *Conv.* 2.4.17, is Aristotle's (see *De sensu et sensato* 445b, *Metaphysics* 1.1–2, and *De anima* 3.4–7), developed in reaction against Plato's theory that all abstract

understanding was a form of recollection of the forms or ideas, known before birth; for Aristotle and his followers, even the most abstract thought is accompanied by images. Aristotle's view was interpreted by Aquinas to mean that the human intellect is naturally most fitted to understanding the so-called *quidditas* [specific essence] of the objects of sense perception (see his commentary on *De anima* 3.4–7).

44–45. attributing feet . . . something different: Many examples could be cited, among them Ps. 8.4 and Lam. 1.14 (hands) and 3.34 (foot); the idea was a commonplace: the commentators cite *ST* 1a a.1 q. 9–10.

46–48. Gabriel . . . made Tobias whole: These three are the angels most frequently named in the Bible: Gabriel, the bearer of the Annunciation to Mary (see *Purg.* 10.34–45, with notes); Michael, who leads the angelic host against the rebel angels (Apoc. 12.7); and Raphael (Milton's "sociable angel," *Paradise Lost* 8), who in the Book of Tobias, included in the Vulgate and therefore canonical in Catholicism, instructs the younger Tobias how to restore his father's sight, as well as to prevent the devil from preventing his marriage. All three are archangels and are said in the Bible to take on human form (Gen. 18–19, Tob. 5.5); Beatrice's mention of the Church here may refer to frescoes and other visual arts.

49–63. What Timaeus argues . . Mercury, and Mars: Beatrice's discussion of Plato's *Timaeus* and its doctrine of the origin and destination of souls has two parts: the first (lines 49–54) distinguishes Plato's literal doctrine from what the pilgrim has just seen; the second (lines 55–60) proposes another, more acceptable interpretation of it (in fact a metaphorical or allegorical one that applies equally to the *Paradiso*).

49–54. What Timaeus argues . . . to be a form: Beatrice first assumes that the literal meaning of the text of the *Timaeus* is Plato's doctrine (line 51).

49. What Timaeus argues: As Varanini 1984 observes, Dante's naming of Timaeus as the speaker of the cosmogony in the *Timaeus* would seem to be evidence of his having direct knowledge of Calcidius's translation; however, it is also a conventional way of citing the title of the dialogue.

52–54. He says . . . to be a form: A summary of *Timaeus* 41d–42b. After fashioning the lesser souls out of the same materials as the World Soul, though less pure, the Demiurge "placed each soul in a star . . . Now, whenever by necessity a soul would be implanted in a body . . . [after death] he who had

lived as he ought would return to the star in which he had been sown, to inhabit it and live a true and blessed life."

On the Aristotelian/Scholastic (not Platonic) idea of the soul as the "form" of the body, see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 11. Dante's mention of "Nature" also invokes a medieval concept very different from Plato's "necessity" (see Gregory 1957). The question of Dante's direct knowledge of the *Timaeus* has been much debated; we incline toward the positive view.

55–60. And perhaps his opinion . . . some truth: Beatrice now suggests that Plato's statement is a metaphorical expression of a truth, namely of the importance of the influence, both positive and negative, of the heavenly bodies on human personalities (see Additional Notes 12 and 14). Note the parallel between the more and less apparent meanings of both Plato's and Dante's texts, and with *Conv.* 4.21.2–3, where Dante suggests there is some truth in all the opinions of the philosophers about the origin of the soul when rightly understood (cf. *Conv.* 3.14.15, *Ecl.* 4.16–24).

58–60. if he means . . . some truth: If Plato means that human beings share the praise or blame for their actions with the planets, to the extent that their native talents and temperaments are beyond their control (like the color of their hair; see 32.61–75, with notes) because they are determined by the heavenly bodies, then his meaning is acceptable. (Dante is not the originator of this view; Guillaume de Conches, the twelfth-century glossator of the *Timaeus*, seems to have been the first to state it; see Jeauneau 1965 and Jeauneau 1973; Guillaume gives the same interpretation; see our note on "O qui perpetua," lines 18–21.) Beatrice's remarks are *a fortiori* to be applied to the *Comedy*, and she here states one of its fundamental themes (cf. the notes to lines 1–18, 55–60).

61–63. This principle . . . Mercury, and Mars: The power of the stars, although it determines many aspects of one's life, is limited; wrongly understood, astronomical doctrine may seem to attribute the entire responsibility for human actions to the stars (cf. *Purg.* 16.67–72), as in the superstitious belief in astral determinism and judicial astrology; in antiquity it led to the planets being worshipped as gods (cf. 8.1–12, with notes).

64–72. The other doubt . . . I shall content you: A transition to the second topic, the question of violence: since the pilgrim expects the judgments of Heaven to be just, his questioning them indicates the soundness of his faith (see lines 130–32).

67–69. that our justice . . . wicked heresy: Sapegno points out that here *argumento di* can mean either "evidence of" or "incitement to."

70–72. But since your understanding . . . content you: God's justice being by definition transcendent, human beings can penetrate it only in part (see Cantos 18–19); this, however, is an instance that human understanding can grasp (as Aristotle did).

73–114. If violence is . . . both speak truly: The resolution of the pilgrim's first doubt (lines 19–21), again in two parts: (1) the apparent contradiction between Piccarda's and Beatrice's words (lines 91–114), another instance of careful interpretation. (Part 2 begins in line 91.)

73–90. If violence is . . . harmed you many times: Dante attributes to Beatrice here a very conventional formulation, almost a translation of Aristotle's conclusion to his analysis of the question in *Nich. Eth.* 3.2.12: "It appears therefore that an act is compulsory when its origin is from outside, the person compelled contributing nothing to it" (the commentators also cite *ST* 1a 2ae q. 6 a. 4–6, which uses similar language). Noteworthy, however, is the emphasis on the intensity of will that can resist violence.

Fire imagery, closely associated with that of light, is systematically invoked by Dante (cf. 1.139–41 and *Purg.* 18.28–30, with notes); Ovid's tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, whose love burns all the more fiercely when forbidden, offers many suggestions (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 13).

82–87. If their will . . . all too rare: The divided will is a central issue in traditional Christian thought; its extreme form can only be healed by grace, as in Romans 7.7–12 and Augustine's account of his conversion in *Confessions* Book 8. Dante seems to indicate, in Piccarda's statement of the reason for her low rank in Heaven (3.56–57), that it is a punishment for her broken vows. But one must keep in mind that the sins of every soul in Heaven have been repented and forgiven and that the split in their wills has been healed in Purgatory. Is Dante inconsistent here?

The most probable answer to this question is that Dante regarded the weakness of will of these souls as beyond their control and due to the importance of the influence of the moon on their personalities (note the parallel with Justinian in Mercury, and Cunizza, Folquet, and Rahab in Venus). In 32.73–75 saint Bernard indicates that the basic determining factor of beatitude is the souls' "primo acume" [basic sharpness of intellect] (cf. 32.75 and 14.37–51). Dante seems to conceive of souls in Heaven as in a sense like containers: all are filled completely—even to overflowing—with vision, not

equally, but according to their differing capacities. The dimness of the appearance of the moon children compared with "higher" souls' disappearance in the brightness of their joy would seem at least partly accounted for in this way.

83–84. like what held Laurence . . . toward his hand: A Christian and a pagan example: Saint Laurence was a third-century martyr, first mentioned by saint Ambrose; he was roasted on a grill, which he was said to have joked about (*Legenda aurea*). Mucius Scaevola (mentioned, with other Romans, in both *Conv.* 4.5.3 and *Mon.* 2.5.4), when threatened with torture by the Etruscan king, Lars Porsenna, demonstrated the idleness of the threat by holding his right hand in a burning brazier (Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 2.12).

91–114. But now another . . . both speak truly: The second part of Beatrice's answer on violence, introducing the distinction between absolute and conditioned will (discussed below).

91–93. But now another . . . would tire first: A transition to the new topic: exactly why this issue would be inextricable for the pilgrim is not clear (Beatrice's explanation will repeat Aristotle's words almost verbatim).

94–99. I have planted . . . contradict me here: The new topic is introduced as resolving the apparent contradiction between Piccarda's and Beatrice's words. Beatrice is remembering 3.31–33.

100–114. Many times has it . . . both speak truly: The fear of violence leads to compromise with it, against one's preference, often leading to wrong actions. Beatrice presents a somewhat compressed version of *Nich. Eth.* 3.1.1–12; the terminology of absolute and conditioned will is Scholastic, derived from this passage (see *ST* 1a 2ae q. 6 a. 6).

103–5. like Alcmaeon, who . . . became impious: In *Theb.* 2.265–305 and 4.187–212, to gain the necklace made by Vulcan for the goddess Harmonia, Eriphyle betrays the hiding place of her husband, the seer Amphiaraus (see the notes to *Inf.* 20.31–36 and 33), so that he must fight at Thebes, where he dies. Although Beatrice says that Amphiaraus asked Alcmaeon to avenge him, in *Thebaid* 7 it is to Apollo he entrusts the revenge, foreseeing his son's deeds. Aristotle mentions Euripides' version of the myth (of which only fragments survive) in *Nich. Eth.* 3.1.8, scoffing at it as ridiculously implausible. Dante mentions Alcmaeon's revenge as famous in *Purg.* 12.49–51. Since Alcmaeon is not threatened with violence, the example seems extraneous to the previous ones; but Beatrice has generalized the issue in lines 100–102.

105. so as not to fail . . . became impious: The line echoes Ovid's reference to Alcmaeon in *Met.* 9.407–8: "ultusque parente parentem / natus erit facto pius et sceleratus eodem" [avenging one parent on the other, the son will become by one and the same deed both dutiful and wicked].

106–14. On this point . . . both speak truly: The problem is resolved in terms of the distinction between absolute will (what the will desires independently of all circumstance) and conditioned will (specific determination to a particular action). The distinction underlies Virgil's elaborate discussion in *Purgatorio* 17–18 of the necessity of bringing the conditioned will into full conformity with the absolute will—the central theme of the *Purgatorio*. See especially our notes on *Purg.* 18.55–66 and 19.29–33.

106–8. On this point . . . cannot be excused: In other words, the individual's compromise with the external compulsion is a contribution to or acceptance of it, in the terms of lines 73–74.

109–14. Absolute will . . . both speak truly: Dante does not introduce the term *conditioned*, but it is clearly implied, especially in "the other" (line 114); it is included in the translation for clarity. In other words, although Constance gave in to the compulsion in order to avoid worse trouble (conditioned will), her fundamental desire for the veil was independent of circumstances (absolute will).

112–14. when Piccarda . . . both speak truly: The refining of interpretation of Piccarda's words is parallel to Beatrice's finding a possible acceptable meaning in Plato's doctrine of the return of souls to the stars; both involve dealing with apparent contradictions.

115–42. Such was the overflowing . . . with eyes cast down: A striking testimony to the enormous impression Aristotle's lucid analyses made on thinkers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; he was "the master of those who know" (*Inf.* 4.131), to such an extent that we find Dante treating certain clarifications of his as issuing from the fount of all wisdom, God himself. The kind of intense intellectual satisfaction that Dante expresses here (in his characteristic language: an overwhelming love of the principle of illumination personified by Beatrice) was a major factor in the optimistic reassessment of human reason brought about in the Scholastic period (see our introduction to the *Inferno*, pp. 15–17). (For the traditional topos of eloquence as a river, cf. *Inf.* 1.79–80, with note.)

121–23. my power of feeling . . . answer for it: The pilgrim is able to recognize intellectually the profundity of his debt to Beatrice, as well as the fact that his human limitations prevent his even feeling it appropriately enough to repay her, and he calls on God ("he who has the power") to do so. For a similar formulation, see 15.79–84; for the topos, see *Aen.* 1.600–605. On the pilgrim's use of *voi*, see the note on line 138.

124–32. I see well . . . from peak to peak: A particularly clear statement of the axiom supporting Dante's intellectualism (which he shares with the Dominicans; cf. 14.37–60, with notes): the deepest satisfaction possible is that of the contemplation of truth, and the earthly experience of it leads to the belief that the ultimate—the beatific—vision of God is the true and reachable goal.

127–28. there it rests, like a beast in its lair: Another striking image, expressing the highest intellectual satisfaction, which human beings share with the angels, in terms of the intense, even fierce, feeling of security—in fact, of being at home—felt, as Dante imagines, by wild animals (note the recurrence: lines 4–6, and compare Dante's use of the metaphor of hunting—for the truth—in *DVE* 1.16.1–4 and *Mon.* 2.7.1).

128–29. and it can . . . would be *frustra* [in vain]: As Chiavacci Leonardi observes, this argument is also used by Aquinas (*ST* 1a q. 12 a. 1): "If the intellect of the rational creature cannot reach the First Cause, the desire of nature would be empty".

130–32. Thus doubt is born . . . from peak to peak: Because of the faith in the attainability of ultimate truth ("thus" [*per quello*: literally, because of this]; cf. *Conv.* 3.15.7), doubt leads upwards (always assuming the motivation of the doubter); it springs up like a fountain or a burgeoning plant [*rampollo*] (the same term is used of the pilgrim's thoughts of Beatrice in *Purg.* 27.42). The "foot of the truth" in line 131 can be taken as a tree image, but it is replaced in line 132 by the image of a mountain or mountain range, inescapably recalling the mountain of Purgatory. The eager questioning of doubt, not satisfied with easy answers, expresses "our nature"—"All men naturally desire to know" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1.1; cf. *Purg.* 21.1–3, with note)—which impels us to strive to ever higher insights until we reach "the summit," the Highest. Thus the canto returns to the impasse presented at its beginning and resolves it; one notes the strong, if implicit, reference to the Neoplatonic concept of the intellectual ascent as *return* (cf. *De div. nom.* 981d).

This fervent passage clearly impressed Petrarch, who drew on it for the beginning of his great canzone "Di pensier in pensier, di monte in monte" [From thought to thought, from peak to peak] (*Rime sparse* 129). His canzone does not, however, culminate in the vision of absolute Truth at the summit, but rather in the measurement of distance ("how much air separates me from her beloved face").

133–42. This invites me . . . with eyes cast down: The conclusion to the canto announces the topic of Canto 5, and it may surprise modern readers (especially ones unfamiliar with the traditions of Roman Catholicism) to realize that most of Cantos 2–5 are devoted to the technical casuistics of vows. In an age when all Christian denominations face an unprecedented and long-term crisis of recruitment, one tends to forget how universal and serious the concern with vows was in the Middle Ages—not only among the enormous numbers of religious of both sexes (vowed to chastity, poverty, and obedience whether in convents or, like the mendicant orders, in the cities), but also among countless lay persons of all ranks in society: out of spontaneous devotion or when sick or in danger, they made vows to practice abstinence, to perform penitence or devotions to a particular saint, to go on pilgrimages or crusades, to help finance religious causes, to give children as oblates to monasteries or to the priesthood, or to enter monasteries themselves. The clergy were often vigilant to see publicly made vows fulfilled, especially if made by rulers.

136–38. I would know . . . your scales: The pilgrim's question is: Can the content of vows be changed in a way that will not be found wanting? The term "other goods" [*altri beni*] already anticipates the distinction Beatrice will make between the form and the matter of vows (5.43–62).

138. in your scales: *Statera* [balance] is a classical and biblical term for the traditional form of scales: a pivoted cross-piece from which two platters are suspended, one for the objects to be weighed, the other for objects of known weight; it is the traditional attribute of Justice (the zodiacal sign Libra was associated with Virgo, traditionally identified as the goddess of justice; cf. *Met.* 1.149–50, *Aen.* 12.725–27). There are numerous biblical denunciations of unjust earthly *staterae*: Lev. 19.30, Hos. 12.7, Amos 8.5; Heaven's weighings will of course be just (see the equivalent term *bilancia* [balance], referring to vows in 5.62 and to Christ's full satisfaction of the law in 13.42).

138. your: *Vostre* [your] can be either singular (referring to Beatrice) or plural (referring to all the inhabitants of Heaven). Three times previously in the

Paradiso (2.49, 4.122, and 4.134), the pilgrim has addressed Beatrice with the respectful verb or pronoun; he will not address her again—she will read his mind—until 31.80–90, a passage that will have great effect (see also *Purg.* 31.36; 33.30, 81, 91).

141–42. overcome, my powers . . . eyes cast down: Note the parallel with the pilgrim's faint in *Inf.* 5.139–42.

CANTO 5

"S' io ti fiammeggio nel caldo d'amore
di là dal modo che 'n terra si vede,
sì che del viso tuo vinco il valore,
non ti maravigliar, ché ciò procede
da perfetto veder, che, come apprende,
così nel bene appreso move il piede.
Io veggio ben sì come già resplende
ne l'intelletto tuo l'etterna Luce
che, vista, sola e sempre amore accende,
e s' altra cosa vostro amor seduce,
non è se non di quella alcun vestigio
mal conosciuto che quivi traluce.
Tu vuo' saper se con altro servigio
per manco voto si può render tanto
che l'anima securi di letigio."
Sì cominciò Beatrice questo canto,
e sì com' uom che suo parlar non spezza
continuò così 'l processo santo:
"Lo maggior don che Dio per sua larghezza
fesse creando, e a la sua bontate
più conformato, e quel che più s'apprezza,
fu de la volontà la libertate,
di che le creature intelligenti,
e tutte e sole, fuoro e son dotate.
Or ti parrà, se tu quinci argomenti,
l'alto valor del voto, s' è sì fatto
che Dio consenta quando tu consenti,
ché, nel fermar tra Dio e l'omo il patto,
vittima fassi di questo tesoro,
tal quale io dico, e fassi col suo atto.

CANTO 5

Moon, continued: Can the matter of a vow be changed?—People should be slow to vow—Mercury: souls of followers of glory

"If I flame toward you in the heat of love
beyond the measure that is seen on earth, so
that I overcome the power of your sight,
do not marvel, for it proceeds from perfect
sight, which, as it apprehends, so moves its foot
toward the apprehended good.
I see well how the eternal Light already
shines in your intellect, the Light that, when
seen, alone and always kindles love,
and if some other thing leads your love
astray, it is only some vestige of the eternal
Light, ill understood, that shines through it.
You wish to know if with some other service
one can replace an unfulfilled vow with enough
to secure the soul from accusation."
Thus Beatrice began this canto; and like one
who does not interrupt his speech, she
continued thus her holy discourse:
"The greatest gift that ever in his bountfulness
God gave in creating, and the most conformed
to his goodness, the one that is most prized,
was the freedom of the will, with which the
creatures with intelligence, all of them and only
they, were and are endowed.
Now you will see, if you argue from this premise, the high worth a vow has, if it is such that
God consents when you consent,
for, when such a pact is made between God
and man, this treasure is sacrificed, precious as
it is, and this is done by its own act.

Dunque che render puossi per ristoro? 31
Se credi bene usar quel c' hai offerto,
di maltolletto vuo' far buon lavoro.
Tu se' omai del maggior punto certo, 34
ma perché santa Chiesa in ciò dispensa,
che par contra lo ver ch' i' t'ho scoverto,
convienti ancor sedere un poco a mensa, 37
però che 'l cibo rigido c' hai preso
richiede ancora aiuto a tua dispensa.
Apri la mente a quel ch'io ti paleso 40
e fermalvi entro, ché non fa scïenza,
sanza lo ritenere, avere inteso.
Due cose si convegnono a l'essenza 43
di questo sacrificio: l'una è quella
di che si fa; l'altr' è la convenenza.
Quest' ultima già mai non si cancella 46
se non servata, e intorno di lei
sì preciso di sopra si favella:
però necessitato fu a li Ebrei 49
pur l'offerere, ancor ch' alcuna offerta
si permutasse, come saver dei.
L'altra, che per materia t'è aperta, 52
puote ben esser tal che non si falla
se con altra materia si converta.
Ma non trasmuti carco a la sua spalla 55
per suo arbitrio alcun, sanza la volta
e de la chiave bianca e de la gialla;
e ogne permutanza credi stolta 58
se la cosa dimessa in la sorpresa
come 'l quattro nel sei non è raccolta.
Però qualunque cosa tanto pesa 61
per suo valor che tragga ogne bilancia,
sodisfar non si può con altra spesa.
Non prendan li mortali il voto a ciancia; 64
siate fedeli, e a ciò far non bieci
come Ieptè a la sua prima mancia,
cui più si convenia dicer: 'Mal feci' 67
che, servando, far peggio. E così stolto
ritrovar puoi il gran duca de' Greci,

Therefore what can one give to replace it? If you want to put to good use what you have offered up, you are trying to do good with something stolen.

You are now assured of the central point, but because holy Church grants dispensation in this matter, which seems against the truth I have shown you,

you must sit a little longer at table, since the tough food you have taken in still requires help for its digestion.

Open your mind to what I reveal to you and fix it there within, for there is no certain knowledge in having understood without retaining.

Two things constitute the essence of this sacrifice: one is the thing offered up; the other is the agreement.

This latter can never be cancelled except by being kept, and on this point my speech above was so precise:

for this reason it was still necessary for the Hebrews to make offerings, although things offered could at times be changed, as you must know.

The other, which you can see is matter to the form, can indeed be such that one does not err exchanging it with some other matter.

But let no one change the load upon his shoulders by his own decision, without the turning of both the white and the yellow key;

believe that any substitution is folly if the thing set aside is not included in the one taken up as four is included in six.

But whatever has so much value that it weighs down every scale, that cannot be replaced by any expense.

Let not mortals take vows as idle talk; be faithful, but not cross-eyed like Jephthah in his first gift,

who should have said: 'I did wrong' rather than, keeping the promise, doing worse. And you will find the great leader of the Greeks to have been a blockhead,

onde pianse Efigènia il suo bel volto,
e fé pianger di sé i folli e i savi
ch' udir parlar di così fatto cólto.
Siate, Cristiani, a muovervi più gravi:
non siate come penna ad ogne vento,
e non crediate ch' ogne acqua vi lavi.
Avete il novo e 'l vecchio Testamento
e 'l pastor de la Chiesa che vi guida:
questo vi basti a vostro salvamento.
Se mala cupidigia altro vi grida,
uomini siate e non pecore matte,
sì che 'l Giudeo di voi tra voi non rida.
Non fate com' agnel che lascia il latte
de la sua madre, e semplice e lascivo
seco medesmo a suo piacer combatte!"
Così Beatrice a me com' ïo scrivo;
poi si rivolse tutta disïante
a quella parte ove 'l mondo è più vivo.
Lo suo tacere e 'l trasmutar sembiante
puoser silenzio al mio cupido ingegno,
che già nuove questioni avea davante,
e sì come saetta che nel segno
percuote pria che sia la corda queta,
così corremmo nel secondo regno.
Quivi la donna mia vid' io sì lieta
come nel lume di quel ciel si mise,
che più lucente se ne fé 'l pianeta.
E se la stella si cambiò e rise,
qual mi fec' io, che pur da mia natura
trasmutabile son per tutte guise!
Come 'n peschiera ch' è tranquilla e pura
traggonsi i pesci a ciò che vien di fori
per modo che lo stimin lor pastura,
sì vid' io ben più di mille splendori
trarsi ver' noi, e in ciascun s'udia:
"Ecco chi crescerà li nostri amori."
E sì come ciascuno a noi venìa
vedeasi l'ombra piena di letizia
nel folgór chiaro che di lei uscia.

because of whom Iphigenia wept for her
lovely face, and made both fools and wise men
weep for her, when they heard of such religion.
O Christians, be slower to be moved: be not
like a feather in every wind, and do not believe
that every water will wash you.
You have the New and the Old Testament
and the shepherd of the Church to guide you;
let this suffice for your salvation.
If evil greed shouts some other word, be
human beings, not brainless sheep, so that the
Jew may not laugh at you in your midst.
Do not act like the lamb that leaves its
mother's milk and, simple and wanton, fights
against itself and its own pleasure!"
So Beatrice to me, as I write; then she turned
back, all desirous, toward that direction where
the world is most alive.
Her silence and her transmuted face imposed
silence on my eager mind, which already had
new questions before it,
and like an arrow that strikes the target
before the bowstring has been stilled, so we
sped into the second realm.
There I saw my lady so joyous, when she
entered the light of that heaven, that the planet
shone more brightly for it.
And if the planet changed and laughed, what
did I become, who in my nature am
transmutable in every respect!
As in a fishpond tranquil and pure the fish
approach what comes from outside, if they
deem it to be their food,
so I saw more than a thousand splendors
drawing toward us, and from each we heard:
"Behold one who will increase our loves!"
And as each one drew near, we could see
the shade was full of gladness by the brightness
that came forth from it.

Pensa, lettor, se quel che qui s'inizia
non procedesse, come tu avresti
di più savere angosciosa carizia,
e per te vederai come da questi
m'era in disio d'udir lor condizioni,
sì come a li occhi mi fur manifesti.
"O bene nato a cui veder li troni
del trïunfo etternal concede grazia
prima che la milizia s'abbandoni,
del Lume che per tutto il Ciel si spazia
noi semo accesi; e però, se disii
di noi chiarirti, a tuo piacer ti sazia."
Così da un di quelli spirti pii
detto mi fu, e da Beatrice: "Dì, dì
sicuramente, e credi come a dii."
"Io veggio ben sì come tu t'annidi
nel proprio lume, e che de li occhi il traggi,
perché corusca sì come tu ridi,
ma non so chi tu se' né perché aggi,
anima degna, il grado de la spera
che si vela a' mortai con altrui raggi."
Questo diss' io diritto a la lumera
che pria m'avea parlato, ond' ella fessi
lucente più assai di quel ch' ell' era.
Sì come il sol che si cela elli stessi
per troppa luce, come 'l caldo ha róse
le temperanze d'i vapori spessi:
per più letizia sì mi si nascose
dentro al suo raggio la figura santa,
e così chiusa chiusa mi rispuose
nel modo che 'l seguente canto canta.

Think, reader, how deprived you would feel,
how anxious to know more, if what begins here
did not proceed,
and you will see by your example how much I
desired to hear from them their condition, as
soon as they were manifest to my eyes.
"O well-born one, to whom grace grants to
see the thrones of the eternal triumph before
your warfare is abandoned,
we are aflame with the Light that ranges
through all Heaven; and therefore if you wish to
be illumined by us, drink your fill."
Thus did one of the holy spirits speak to me,
and Beatrice: "Speak, speak freely, and believe
them as gods."
"I see well how you nestle within your own
light, and that you shoot it forth from your eyes,
for it flashes when you laugh,
but I do not know who you are, nor why,
worthy soul, you occupy the sphere that veils
itself from mortals with another's rays."
This I addressed to the light that had first
spoken to me, whereat it became much brighter
than before.
Like the sun, which hides in its excess of light,
when the heat has worn away the tempering
of thick vapors:
so in its greater gladness that holy face
became hidden from me within its own rays, and
thus, all enclosed, it answered me
in the mode that the following canto sings.

NOTES

1–15. If I flame . . . the soul from accusation: Beatrice explains her added brightness (see also 3.1–3, with note) and restates (lines 13–15) the pilgrim's question regarding the commutation by the Church of unfulfilled, or "empty," vows (4.136–38, 5.14). This introduction deploys key concepts for *Paradiso*.

4–6. do not marvel . . . apprehended good: Explicit here is Dante's position, fundamental to the *Comedy*, that intellection and understanding (often expressed as vision, here "sight") are prior to the act of will, expressed as desire and love; cf. *Purg.* 18.22–33, with notes, and see 4.124–32, which prepares this passage; also 14.40–41, 15.73–84, 28.109–11, with notes, and Additional Note 3. Acts of will are prominent in Cantos 3–5.

4–5. for it proceeds from perfect sight: Most commentators take the "sight" to be that of Beatrice, in her role of imparting Wisdom, rather than the pilgrim's, as is sometimes suggested (but how then justify 3.25–30?). The point is that Beatrice exemplifies the proper ordering of understanding and choice, preparing subsequent discussion of the will.

5–6. as it apprehends so moves its foot: Completing the sequence of understanding followed by desire, the poet's shift from abstract to concrete discourse reflects how the poem is a journey of the mind to God in the guise of movement through space. For the "foot" of the will, see *Purg.* 18.44; for the pilgrim's foot, see *Purg.* 17.84, with note; and on the two feet of the soul see *Inf.* 1.30 and note.

7–12. I see well . . . shines through it: Beatrice postulates the light of immutable truth shining within the mind of the pilgrim; once strengthened (through education; see *Purg.* 16.73–81 and notes), it is a reliable guide to right judgment.

9. when seen, alone and always kindles love: Compare Francesca (*Inf.* 5.103: "Love, that pardons no one beloved from loving") and Virgil: "Love, kindled by virtue, always kindles other love" (*Purg.* 22.10–11; see note there).

11–12. some vestige . . . that shines through it: For "vestige," see 1.106–7 and note, and *Mon.* 1.8.2 ("the whole universe is simply an imprint [*vestigium*] of divine goodness"), where the "imprint" is the natural excellence of monarchical

rule. For *Monarchia* and this canto, see note to lines 19–24, and Additional Note 2.

16–18. Thus Beatrice began . . . holy discourse: Dante's attention to Beatrice's speech, along with related passages in lines 85–87, 109–14 (the second address to readers; cf. 2.1–18 and note), and line 139, point to the pilgrim's dependence on Beatrice's discourse—termed a "holy process" (line 18)—in guiding him through the heavens. Thus in this canto, the verb *proceeds* (lines 4, 110) is to be taken as alluding to the procession of the *Verbum*, the Word, from God, mediated through Beatrice (see 7.112–14 and note, and Additional Note 1).

16. Thus Beatrice began this canto: Mentioning the formal unit of the canto with the inception of Beatrice's speech as a mediation of the Word, Dante suggests that she begins the song that is Dante's poem at its remote origin (see *VN* 42.2) and guarantees its truth at every stage of the way; see *Inf.* 2.103–8, *Purg.* 31.115–41, and *Par.* 31.79–90, with notes.

19–87. The greatest gift . . . the world is most alive: Beatrice's last exposition in the moon sets out Dante's view of the vow as a pact between man and God, and of the powers, limitations, and abuses of ecclesiastical authority in the administration of these pacts.

19–63. The greatest gift . . . by any expense: Religious vows (chastity and obedience, and sometimes poverty) involve a voluntary sacrifice that renders back to God his greatest gift to man, that of free will (lines 19–33). The sacrifice of free will is beyond any dispensation, as it is a treasure that cannot be replaced or augmented with anything greater. Beatrice explains that if the Church permits commutation of certain vows, this may be justifiable with respect to their matter (e.g. abstaining from wine rather than meat during Lent), but never with respect to the form, that is, the fact of the vow itself (34–63).

Aquinas also denies that a monastic vow of chastity can be dispensed, even by the pope (*ST* 3a q. 88. a. 10). Dante's views are much stricter than the views of, for example, Hostiensis (Henry of Susa), the commentator on the *Decretals*: for Hostiensis, the pope can release from any vow, even that of chastity, if greater good ensues (such as a dynastic marriage furthering peace, as in the case of Costanza, 3.109–30 and note). For Pastore Stocchi *NLD* Dante in this canto attacks the views of Hostiensis (see note below).

19–24. The greatest gift . . . were and are endowed: With the exception of *Ep.* 13, this is the only quotation of the *Comedy* in any of Dante's other works

(Dante's excerpts of his own poetry in the *DVE* are all lyric); it is cited at *Mon.* 1.12.6 in reference to the double goal of humanity, happiness on this earth, and happiness in Heaven:

> This freedom (or this principle of all our freedom) is the greatest gift given by God to human nature—as I have already said in the *Paradiso* of the *Comedy*—since by virtue of it we become happy here as men, by virtue of it we become happy elsewhere as gods [translation by Prue Shaw].

See Additional Note 2.

19–22. The greatest gift . . . was the freedom of the will: See *Purg.* 16.7–78, 18.64–74, and 27.140, with notes, passages that define the work of Purgatory as the recovery of the freedom of the will, and where Beatrice is indicated by Virgil as an examiner on freedom of the will (*Purg.* 18.73–75 and note). Aquinas touches on this view of the vow, but only incidentally (*ST* 3a q. 88 a. 4).

19–21. The greatest gift . . . conformed to his goodness: For the generosity and goodness of the Creator, see 2.106–48, 130–32; 7.64–66 and notes.

23–24. creatures with intelligence . . . are endowed: That is, men and angels, all of them, and they alone in the creation, both before and after the fall of the rebel angels and the fall of man; the present tense ("are") allows that new free souls are continuously created by God (see *Purg.* 25.61–75, with notes).

26–27. if it is such that God consents when you consent: The pact must be virtuous if it is to be admissible to God; for Aquinas, a vow is a promise made to God that He accepts (2a 2ae q. 88 a. 12). Dante's phraseology emphasizes that the pact is balanced and reciprocal (see Additional Note 8).

28–30. for when such a pact is made . . . done by its own act: "Pact" [*patto*], "precious," and "by its own act," as well as "sacrificed" (line 44) suggest that Dante charges a vow sworn before God with the force of the scriptural covenants [*pactum*, *foedus*] between God and his people (e.g. Gen. 6.18, 9.9–17; Exod. 6.5), that is, with Noah, Abraham, and Israel (see *Par.* 12.17 and note), which are fulfilled in the voluntary sacrifice of Christ, the new covenant, offered up by God himself for man's salvation (cf. Heb. 9.11–22; Anselm, *CDH* 1.7). Thus the discussion of vows prepares the discussion of the Atonement in cantos 6–7; see notes to lines 61–62 and 63.

32–33. If you want to put to good use . . . something stolen: Once sacrificed, the freedom of the will cannot be recovered; this would be like taking back a

gift and reusing it for profit. Compare "something stolen" [*maltolletto*] with Dante's language for robbery (*Inf*. 11.36, "wrongful extortion" [*tollette dannose*]) and simony (*Inf*. 19.98, "ill-gotten coin" [*mal tolta moneta*]). "Good use" also alludes to usury, by which profit is obtained from money whose use is sold. Oliva 1991 takes the imagery of exchange, weights, and measures (see lines 55, 61–62) as satirical, alluding to the commutation of vows for money that was allowed by the canonists Dante abhorred.

34–63. You are now assured . . . replaced by any expense: The apparent contradiction of the Church's commutation and dispensation of vows is now discussed. Pastore Stocchi *NLD* notes that Beatrice's argument follows the discursive formulas of scholastic reasoning (e.g. *sed contra* [but on the contrary]), but with a twist, since her conclusion is that some vows may *not* be dispensed, contradicting Hostiensis and much contemporary practice. Dante's disapproval of liberal dispensation parallels his attitude toward indulgences in *Purgatorio* (see *Purg*. 2.94–102, with notes, and Durling 2010).

34–42. You are now assured . . . understood without retaining: Beatrice is the teacher of Wisdom (for Wisdom's banquet see Prov. 9.1–6, *Purg*. 13.27, with note). "Hard food" is the truth too difficult for neophytes, who need milk (see Heb. 5.12–14).

35–39. holy Church grants dispensation . . . help for its digestion: Dante's equivocal rhyme on *dispensa* [dispenses], that is, annuls or forgives, and *dispensa*, meaning digests or distributes (the third rhyme is *mensa* [table]), is found also in Aquinas's discussion of the dispensation of vows (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 88 a. 10).

40–42. Open your mind . . . understood without retaining: Beatrice's proverbial phrasing, found in Seneca and Albertanus of Brescia, continues the implication that intellectual absorption is a metaphorical meal, a link that remains implicit in the idea of conserving what has been learned as food for the mind; see also line 124 and *Purg*. 25.34–45, with notes. For Dante's poem as nourishment, see Durling 1981a (and see 17.130–32 and note).

43–51. Two things constitute . . . as you must know: The traditional distinction of matter and form, made explicit in line 52. Dante's use here of the scholastic language for the sacraments parallels Aquinas's use of the form/matter distinction in his discussion of vows (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 88 a. 5).

49–51. for this reason it was still necessary . . . could at times be changed: Many Old Testament texts describe the devotion of gifts to God (see Exod.

23.19, 34.26; Leviticus 27.1–34, etc.). For several early commentators, the reference to changing the thing offered recalls the attempted sacrifice of Isaac by his father Abraham (traditionally seen as an Old Testament prefiguration of the sacrifice of Christ) only to have an angel furnish a substitute sacrificial animal; compare note to lines 64–72.

52–63. The other . . . by any expense: The vow itself, the "agreement," may not be revoked, but the matter of the vow, "the thing offered up," may be replaced—only, however, if the new matter exceeds the old by a ratio of 6:4, or 3:2. This is more rigorous than Leviticus 27.30–31 (which adds a fifth part, 6:5 or 20 percent; see 6.138 and note).

55–57. But let no one change . . . of both the white and the yellow key: The vow is a yoke that must be borne, but like the burden imposed by Christ, the "yoke is sweet" (Matt. 11.30). With an abrupt shift out of metaphor, Beatrice refers to the keys of ecclesiastical authority delegated through the pope to bishops and priests (see *Inf*. 27.103–4 and *Purg*. 9.117–27, with notes).

61–63. But whatever has so much . . . by any expense: An imbalance arises when a human being negotiates a pact with God; this anticipates the discussion of the Atonement in Canto 7; for the term "replace" [*sodisfare*] used for Christ paying the debt of Adam's sin, see 7.40–45, 97–102, with notes, and the next note.

62. every scale: Dante's word here, *bilancia*, recalls its near-synonym at 4.136–38 (*statera*; see note), which poses the question of the commutability of vows. Like the yoke in line 55, both types of scales allude to the Cross, the balance Christ used to compensate for the sin of Adam. See 13.42, *Inf*. 23.100–103, 115–26, with notes, and Additional Note 8.

64–84. Let not mortals . . . its own pleasure: Furnishing examples of foolish vows, Beatrice warns against taking vows lightly. Christians should avoid dramatic avowals and look rather to the Scriptures and to the Church for their salvation. Reference to the faithful tempted by "evil cupidity" may imply an attack on the ecclesiastical practice of redeeming vows for money, which the old commentators associate with the friars of saint Anthony (see note to line 79).

64–72. Let not mortals . . . heard of such religion: Facing a difficult campaign, Jephtha, a judge of Israel, promised to sacrifice to God in exchange for victory whatever first came to meet him on his return from battle (Judges 11.30–31). He was met by his daughter, and she asked that she might bewail

her virginity for thirty days before submitting to the knife. When the Greeks sailing against Troy were becalmed in Aulis, Agamemnon, king of Argos and leader of the expedition, was told by the augur Calchas that the fleet could not sail without shedding virgin blood in honor of Diana; the king sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia (in Ovid's version a deer is miraculously substituted for the girl at the crucial moment). See Virgil, *Aen.* 2.116, Calchas speaking:

> Sanguine placasti ventos et virgine caesa,
> cum primum Iliacas, Danai, venistis ad oras
> [with blood you calmed the winds, and a murdered girl,
> when first you came to the Trojan shores, O Greeks.]

(Dante refers to this passage at *Inf.* 20.110–11; see note there). See also Ovid, *Met.* 12.27–34 and *Consol.* 4.m.7.4–8. Dante may have read, in line 101 of Lucretius's *De rerum natura*, a verse similar to line 72 of this canto: "To such great evils could religion persuade" [*tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*].

65. be faithful, but not cross-eyed: Because it involves a promise, Aquinas defines a vow as an act of fidelity (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 88 a. 3).

Dante's word for "cross-eyed," *bieco*, implies resentment, envy, and mistrust, as at *Inf.* 6.91 (Ciacco); see also *Par.* 6.136 and notes. Here the meaning suggests being turned away from righteousness.

67–68. who should have said . . . doing worse: Aquinas reports a comment by Jerome on Jephtha's vow: "In vowing he was foolish [*stultus*], through lack of discretion, and in keeping his vow he was wicked." (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 88 a. 2). Pietro di Dante cites Eccl. 5.3–5 ("An unfaithful and foolish [*stulta*] promise displeaseth Him").

68–69. And you will find . . . a blockhead: "Blockhead" is our translation of *stolto* [Lat. *stultus*], used in comments on Jephtha (see note above), here used for Agamemnon (for other exchanges between the examples of Jephtha and Agamemnon, see next note); it echoes line 58 (*stolta*, also in rhyme, of the facile permutations of vows permitted by the Church); and see also 4.103, with note. In *De officiis* 3.95, Cicero judges Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia harshly: "Better not to have made such a promise than to have permitted so grim a crime."

70–72. Iphigenia wept . . . heard of such religion: In the classical sources Iphigenia is not said to mourn her beauty; Dante, in a kind of chiasmus, transfers

to the Greek princess the account of Jephtha's daughter: "She mourned her virginity in the mountain" (Jud. 11.38).

73–75. O Christians . . . water may wash you: For the apostrophe, cf. 6.103–11. Line 75 is usually taken to mean that holy water (cf. *Purg.* 31.98) and reiterated absolutions will not cleanse sin if vows are careless, because the penitent is not well disposed (that is, prepared or inclined to repent). Baptism itself works only once—to remove original sin.

76–78: You have the New . . . suffice for your salvation: Though professing respect for the institution and authority of the papacy ("the shepherd"), Dante reviled every pope who reigned during his adult life: Celestine V (possibly), Boniface VIII, and the Avignon popes Clement V and John XXII. At line 106 Dante turns to another figure, who will prove to be an emperor, representing the other chief form of authority during the poet's lifetime (cf. *Mon.* 3.16).

79. If evil greed shouts some other word: Taken by the old commentators as an allusion to the extortion practiced by the preaching friars of saint Anthony (more explicitly targeted at 29.103–26; see note there). Recent commentators prefer a general condemnation, but there seems to be no reason to blunt the specific thrust. For Virgil's "shout" against greed, see *Purg.* 22.40–41, with note.

80. be human beings, not brainless sheep: For the proverbial lack of discretion shown by sheep, see *Conv.* 1.11.9. See also 2 Peter 2.12, and see line 83, echoing Prov. 7.22, "As a lamb playing the wanton [*lasciviens*]."

81. so that the Jew in your midst may not laugh at you: Commentators cite Dante's *Ep.* 11.4, with reference to Christians mocked by heretics, infidels, and Jews. Dante uses "Jew" here where he had used "Hebrew" before (see *Purg.* 4.79–84 and note), keeping the anti-Semitic medieval distinction between Old Testament Jews, the chosen people of Israel, and Jews after the Incarnation, grouped with infidels and heretics. See Martinez 2003.

85. So Beatrice to me as I write: The recurring metaphor of the poet as a scribe (see *Purg.* 24.54 and note), here taking dictation from Beatrice, complements his role as listener (lines 5–10) and makes lines 5–87 into a unit.

87. toward that direction where the world is most alive: The commentators agree that this direction is toward the equinoctial point on the ecliptic, near which the sun is found during the pilgrim's journey; see 1.46–48 and note,

Conv. 2.3.15, and *Inf.* 1.37–39, with notes. Note the relation of this liveliness to lines 94–99 and to 2.122–33 (with note).

88–139. Her silence . . . the following canto sings: Rising to the next planet, the pilgrim asks the soul that meets him to reveal its identity and explain its presence in Mercury. The questions sketch a rationale for the pilgrim's visit to all the spheres: character traits derive from the heavenly bodies; the blessed are "children of the planets." See Introduction, pp. 10–11, and Additional Note 13.

88. her silence and her transmuted face: Compare Beatrice's radiant appearance at the beginning of the canto. Terms with the prefix *trans-* are frequent in the early cantos of *Paradiso*, beginning with the instance at 1.70; see also 3.60, 5.55 and 5.88, and 6.111, with notes; at *Inf.* 25.101 and 143 similar terms mark a poetic tour de force.

91–93. and like an arrow . . . the second realm: For the archery metaphor, here suggesting near-instantaneous displacement in space, see 2.22–24 and note. The spheres are contiguous, but the planets are not, and since in every case the pilgrim enters the planet itself, he traverses large distances between stops.

94–99. There I saw my lady . . . in every respect: Each new sphere is moved by an angelic intelligence more powerful than the last, and also entails the increased beauty of Beatrice. The correlation of Beatrice with the angelic intelligences of the spheres is a recurring topic of Dante's poetry (see 8.37–39 and note, *VN* 30, and *Conv.* 2.2; see also 2.133–48, with note); see Additional Note 1.

97. And if the planet changed and laughed: This may be consistent with the animation of the spheres Dante seems to suggest at 2.133–44 (see note), as well as with astrological terminology (planets "rejoice" when in favorable signs). Cf. *Purg.* 1.19–20, with notes. All the heavenly bodies were supposed immutable (Aristotle, *De caelo* 1.2 279a18).

99. transmutable: The same word as in line 88, but see 2 Cor. 3.18 ("But we all beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed [*transformamur*] into the same image from glory to glory . . ."). As a mortal, the pilgrim is subject to change; see Dante's canzone "Voi ch'intendendo," lines 43–45, speaking of Lady Philosophy, "For the lady, that you perceive, has so greatly transmuted [*trasmutata*] your life."

100–108. As in a fishpond . . . came forth from it: Continuing the pond imagery of 3.10–12 and 121–23 (see notes), Dante emphasizes the large group

of souls that comes to receive the pilgrim. This is the first instance in *Paradiso* of the idea that souls entering Heaven are met by throngs of spirits (see 23.19–21 and note and *Conv.* 4.28.5); see *VN* 23.7, Additional Note 4, and Martinez 2004.

105. Behold one who will increase our loves: See Vergil, *Ecl.* 10.54, "so my love will grow" [*crescetis, amores*]. Most commentators understand this as a reference to how charity increases when exchanged between persons; others claim the souls recognize in the pilgrim one who will bring them fame (see 6.112–26 and note); or that the pilgrim, because a poet with Mercury as the house of his natal sign (Gemini) brings luster to the sphere itself (cf. 9.67–69 and note). See *Inf.* 9.81–85, 89; *Purg.* 15.45–57, with notes; and Durling/Martinez 1990.

109–14. Think reader . . . manifest to my eyes: The second address of the reader in the *Paradiso*, consistent with two other self-reflexive passages (lines 16–18, 85–87) and with the close of the canto.

115–20. O well-born one . . . drink your fill: The first statement in *Paradiso* regarding the pilgrim's role as voyager through the eternal realm (see 17.13–142, with notes). "Well-born one" refers not to high social rank, but to the pilgrim's destiny among the blessed; see 3.37 (and cf. also *Inf.* 5.7) and Additional Note 4.

116–17. the thrones . . . your warfare is abandoned: Before his death, the pilgrim will see the pageants of the Church Triumphant (see 23.19–20 and note). "Warfare" is both a reference to life as a struggle (Job 7.1, "The life of man upon earth is a warfare") and to Dante's travails as "a man preaching justice" (*Ep.* 12.7).

116. the thrones: Dante cannot mean that the angels guiding Mercury are Thrones, as these govern the third of the nine spheres in descending order (28.97–139 and note). Either "thrones" is generic here, part of the imagery of victory, or the heaven of the stars is a special destination of the pilgrim (22.112–23 and notes).

122–23. Speak, speak freely and believe them as gods: For the blessed as deities, see *Mon.* 1.12.6 and the note to 1.69; see also Additional Note 1.

124–39. I see well . . . the following canto sings: The face of Piccarda was dimly discernible in the moon (see 3.47–48 and note); here, although the facial features of one of the blessed begin to be hidden by its soul's brightness,

the pilgrim still identifies a smile and discerns that the source of light is the eyes (signifying that the brightness derives from the intensity of the soul's vision; cf. *Conv.* 3.6.11 and 14.37–42).

133–35. Like the sun . . . tempering of thick vapors: The image echoes *Purg.* 30.22–27, Beatrice's advent as the rising sun. For the gradual approach to the sun, see 8.11–12; 9.7–9, 68–69, 118–19, with notes; and Additional Note 6.

136–37. that holy face . . . within its own rays: Compare the disappearance into depth of Piccarda at 3.121–23; see also 8.52–54, with note.

138–39. and thus all enclosed . . . the following canto sings. Repetition in the Italian of "enclosed" (*chiusa chiusa*) intensifies the word's meaning, and the canto itself ends with another nearly exact repetition, "the . . . canto sings" [*canto canta*], juxtaposing song as effect with song as action, and closing out the canto with a metapoetic or self-reflexive moment, as it began (line 16). On the implications of enclosure, see Additional Note 5.

CANTO 6

"Poscia che Costantin l'aquila volse
contr' al corso del ciel, ch' ella seguio
dietro a l'antico che Lavina tolse,
cento e cent' anni e più l'uccel di Dio
ne lo stremo d'Europa si ritenne,
vicino a' monti de' quai prima uscìo,
e sotto l'ombra de le sacre penne
governò 'l mondo lì di mano in mano,
e, sì cangiando, in su la mia pervenne.
Cesare fui e son Iustinïano,
che, per voler del primo amor ch' i' sento,
d'entro le leggi trassi il troppo e 'l vano.
E prima ch' io a l'ovra fossi attento,
una natura in Cristo, non piùe,
credea, e di tal fede era contento,
ma 'l benedetto Agapito, che fue
sommo pastore, a la fede sincera
mi dirizzò con le parole sue.
Io li credetti, e ciò che 'n sua fede era
vegg' io or chiaro sì come tu vedi
ogne contradizione e falsa e vera.
Tosto che con la Chiesa mossi i piedi,
a Dio per grazia piacque di spirarmi
l'alto lavoro, e tutto 'n lui mi diedi,
e al mio Belisar commendai l'armi,
cui la destra del Ciel fu sì congiunta
che segno fu ch' i' dovessi posarmi.
Or qui a la question prima s'appunta
la mia risposta, ma sua condizione
mi stringe a seguitare alcuna giunta,

CANTO 6

Mercury, continued: the emperor Justinian—history of the imperial eagle —Romeo

"After Constantine turned the eagle back
against the course of the heavens, which it had
followed with that ancient one who took Lavinia,
twice a hundred years and more God's bird
remained at the edge of Europe, near the
mountains from which it first came forth,
and under the shadow of its sacred wings it
governed the world there from hand to hand,
and, transferred thus, it came to rest on mine.
Caesar was I, and I am Justinian, who,
according to the will of the first love I feel, cast out
the excess and the useless from within the laws.
And before I was intent upon that work, I
believed there was one nature in Christ, no
more, and with that faith I was content,
but the blessed Agapetus, the highest
shepherd, directed me to the pure faith with
his words.
I believed him, and what was in his faith I see
now as clearly as you see each contradiction to
be both false and true.
As soon as I began to walk in step with the
Church, it pleased God, in his grace, to inspire me
to the high work, to which I gave myself entirely,
and I handed the wars over to my Belisarius,
with whom the right hand of Heaven was so
joined that it was a sign that I should rest.
And here I put a period to my reply to your
first question, but its nature requires me to make
some addition,

perché tu veggi con quanta ragione
si move contr' al sacrosanto segno
e chi 'l s'appropria e chi a lui s'oppone.
Vedi quanta virtù l'ha fatto degno
di reverenza, e cominciò da l'ora
che Pallante morì per darli regno.
Tu sai ch' el fece in Alba sua dimora
per trecento anni e oltre, infino al fine
che i tre a' tre pugnar per lui ancora.
E sai ch' el fé dal mal de le Sabine
al dolor di Lucrezia in sette regi,
vincendo intorno le genti vicine.
Sai quel ch' el fé portato da li egregi
Romani incontro a Brenno, incontro a Pirro,
incontro a li altri principi e collegi,
onde Torquato e Quinzio, che dal cirro
negletto fu nomato, i Deci e ' Fabi
ebber la fama che volontier mirro.
Esso atterrò l'orgogolio de li Aràbi
che di retro ad Anibale passaro
l'alpestre rocce, Po, di che tu labi.
Sott' esso giovanetti trïunfaro
Scipïone e Pompeo, e a quel colle
sotto 'l qual tu nascesti parve amaro.
Poi, presso al tempo che tutto 'l ciel volle
redur lo mondo a suo modo sereno,
Cesare per voler di Roma il tolle.
E quel che fé da Varo infino a Reno,
Isara vide e Era e vide Senna
e ogne valle onde Rodano è pieno.
Quel che fé poi ch' elli uscì di Ravenna
e saltò Rubicon, fu di tal volo
che nol seguiteria lingua né penna.
Inver' la Spagna rivolse lo stuolo,
poi ver' Durazzo, e Farsalia percosse
sì ch' al Nil caldo si sentì del duolo.
Antandro e Simeonta, onde si mosse,
rivide, e là dov' Ettore si cuba;
e mal per Tolomeo poscia si scosse.

so that you may see with what right both
move against the sacrosanct emblem, both those
who claim it as their own and those who oppose it.
See how much power has made it worthy of
reverence, and it began from the hour when
Pallas died to give it rule.
You know that it dwelt in Alba for three
hundred years and more until, finally, the three
fought against the three for its possession.
And you know what it did through seven kings—from
the wrong done the Sabine women to the grief of Lucretia—
as it conquered the neighboring peoples around it.
You know what it did when borne by the noble
Romans against Brennus, against Pyrrhus, against
the other princes and oligarchs,
whence Torquatus and Quinctius, named for
his unkempt curls, the Decii, and the Fabii
earned the fame that I gladly enmyrrh.
It laid low the pride of the Arabs who,
following Hannibal, crossed, Po, the alpine
steeps from which you glide.
Beneath it in their youth Scipio and Pompey
earned their triumphs, and to that hill beneath
which you were born it showed itself bitter.
Then, near the time when all the heavens
wished to reduce the world to their own serene
measure, Caesar took it by the will of Rome.
And what it did from the Var to the Rhine was
seen by the Isère, the Loire, the Seine, and
every valley that fills the Rhone.
What it did after it came forth from Ravenna
and leapt the Rubicon, was such a flight as
neither tongue nor pen could follow.
Toward Spain it turned its host, then toward
Dyrrhacium, and it struck Pharsalia so that the
grief was heard as far as the torrid Nile.
Antandros and Simois, where it originated,
it saw again, and where Hector lies, and ill it was
for Ptolemy when next it shook itself.

Da indi scese folgorando a Iuba,
onde si volse nel vostro occidente,
ove sentia la pompeana tuba.
Di quel che fé col baiulo seguente,
Bruto con Cassio ne l'inferno latra,
e Modena e Perugia fu dolente.
Piangene ancor la trista Cleopatra,
che fuggendoli innanzi dal colubro
la morte prese subitana e atra.
Con costui corse infino al lito rubro,
con costui puose il mondo in tanta pace
che fu serrato a Giano il suo delubro.
Ma ciò che 'l segno che parlar mi face
fatto avea prima e poi era fatturo
per lo regno mortal ch' a lui soggiace,
diventa in apparenza poco e scuro,
se in mano al terzo Cesare si mira
con occhio chiaro e con affetto puro:
ché la viva Giustizia che mi spira
li concedette, in mano a quel ch' i' dico,
gloria di far vendetta a la sua ira.
Or qui t'ammira in ciò ch' io ti replico:
poscia con Tito a far vendetta corse
de la vendetta del peccato antico,
e quando il dente longobardo morse
la santa Chiesa, sotto le sue ali
Carlo Magno vincendo la soccorse.
Omai puoi giudicar di quei cotali
ch' io accusai di sopra e di lor falli,
che son cagion di tutti vostri mali.
L'uno al pubblico segno i gigli gialli
oppone, e l'altro appropria quello a parte,
sì ch' è forte a veder chi più si falli.
Faccian li Ghibellin, faccian lor arte
sott' altro segno, ché mal segue quello
sempre chi la giustizia e lui diparte;
e non l'abbatta esto Carlo novello
coi Guelfi suoi, ma tema de li artigli
ch' a più alto leon trasser lo vello.

Thence like lightning it descended on Juba,
then it turned toward your West, where it heard
the Pompeian trumpet.
For what it did with its next trustee, Brutus
and Cassius bark in Hell, and Modena and
Perugia grieved.
Sad Cleopatra still weeps because of it, who,
fleeing before it, from the serpent took sudden,
black death.
With him it coursed as far as the Red shore,
with him it brought such peace to the world that
Janus' temple was barred up.
But what the emblem that makes me speak
had done earlier, and was to do later for the
mortal realm that is subject to it,
seems little and obscure if it is watched in the
hand of the third Caesar with clear eye and
pure affect:
for the living Justice that inspires me granted
it, in the hands of the one of whom I speak, the
glory of taking vengeance for his anger.
Now gaze long at what I unfold to you: later, it
ran with Titus to take vengeance for the vengeance
taken on the ancient sin,
and, when the Lombard fang bit holy Church,
under its wings Charles the Great came
victorious to her aid.
Now you can judge of those I accused above
and of their errors, for they are the cause of all
your ills.
One man opposes the golden lilies to the public
emblem, and the other usurps it to his party,
so that it is hard to see which errs the more.
Let the Ghibellines, then, let them work their
arts under some other emblem, for he who
separates this one from justice follows it ever ill;
and let not this new Charles strike it down
with his Guelphs, but let him fear the claws that
flayed a greater lion.

Molte fiate già pianser li figli
per la colpa del padre, e non si creda
che Dio trasmuti l'armi per suoi gigli.
Questa picciola stella si correda
di buoni spirti che son stati attivi
perché onore e fama li succeda,
e quando li disiri poggian quivi,
sì disvïando, pur convien che i raggi
del vero amore in sù poggin men vivi.
Ma nel commensurar d'i nostri gaggi
col merto è parte di nostra letizia,
perché non li vedem minor né maggi.
Quindi addolcisce la viva Giustizia
in noi l'affetto sì che non si puote
torcer già mai ad alcuna nequizia.
Diverse voci fanno dolci note:
così diversi scanni in nostra vita
rendon dolce armonia tra queste rote.
E dentro a la presente margarita
luce la luce di Romeo, di cui
fu l'ovra grande e bella mal gradita.
Ma i Provenzai che fecer contra lui
non hanno riso: e però mal cammina
qual si fa danno del ben fare altrui.
Quattro figlie ebbe, e ciascuna reina,
Ramondo Beringhiere, e ciò li fece
Romeo, persona umìle e peregrina.
E poi il mosser le parole biece
a dimandar ragione a questo giusto,
che li assegnò sette e cinque per diece,
indi partissi povero e vetusto,
e se 'l mondo sapesse il cor ch' elli ebbe,
mendicando sua vita a frusto a frusto,
assai lo loda, e più lo loderebbe."

109 Many times have sons wept because of the sins of the fathers, and let it not be thought that God will exchange his emblem for those lilies!

112 This little star is adorned by good spirits who were active so that honor and fame might follow them,

115 and when desires incline in that direction, straying, it must be that the rays of the true love rise up less vigorously.

118 But that our rewards are commensurate with our merit is part of our joy, for we see that they are neither less nor more.

121 Thus the living Justice sweetens our love so that it can never be turned aside to any iniquity.

124 Different voices make sweet notes: thus different thrones in this our life produce a sweet harmony among these wheels.

127 And within this present pearl shines the light of Romeo, whose great and beauteous work was ill received.

130 But those of Provence who worked against him do not laugh: thus he walks ill who feels harmed by the good another does.

133 Four daughters had Raymond Berenguer, and each a queen, and that was done for him by Romeo, a humble person and a foreigner.

136 And when cross-eyed talk led him to demand accounting from this just man, who had repaid him seven and five for ten,

139 then Romeo departed, poor and aged, and if the world knew the heart he bore in him, begging his bread crust by crust,

142 much as it praises him now, it would praise him more."

NOTES

1–142. After Constantine . . . praise him more: As the commentators observe, *Paradiso* 6 forms, along with the sixth cantos of *Inferno* (focusing on the disorders of Florence) and *Purgatorio* (where the purview expands to include all Italy), what has been called a "political triptych" that culminates in the grandiose theme of the entire significance of Rome in human history. The expansion to universal themes and fundamental causes is characteristic of the entire plan of this cantica (and one should note the recurrence of the Roman eagle, along with the ascent to the idea of justice itself, in Canto 18 (see the note to 18.52–136). As six is the number of the

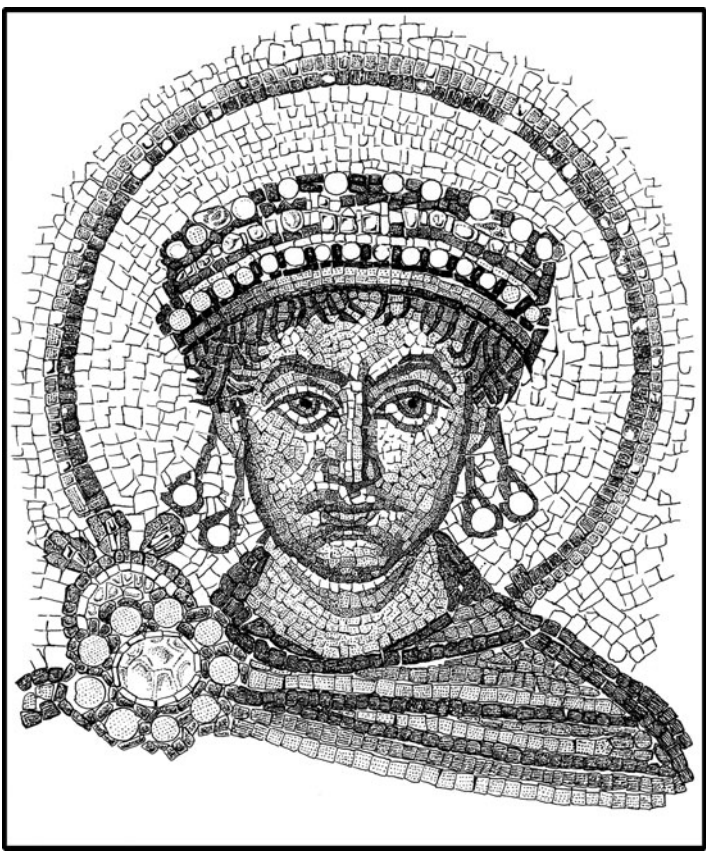

Figure 4. The emperor Justinian

last day of creation, followed by God's rest on the seventh, so the establishment of the Roman Empire represents for Dante the completion of the providential plan for earthly justice, and Canto 7 will rise to the contemplation of God's ways in the Atonement.

Paradiso 6 is unique in the *Comedy* in consisting entirely of the words of a single uninterrupted speaker. The manuscripts of Dante's time used no graphic signs or punctuation to set off dialogue, and it is worth noticing how carefully Dante has included textual markers setting off Justinian's speech (these include the striking "chiusa chiusa" [all enclosed] and "canto canta" [literally, song sings] of 5.138–39, which arouse expectation and indicate that direct discourse will follow, and the opening of Canto 7, especially lines 1–6, which formally close Justinian's utterance). In the present canto, note especially the function of the repetition of the first-person pronoun in lines 10–30 and of the second-person pronoun in lines 31–51, both recurring in lines 88–93 and moving to the first person plural in lines 118 and following.

1–27. After Constantine . . . that I should rest: After indicating his place in history (lines 1–9), Justinian names himself and what he sees as the two most important events of his reign, his (mythical) conversion away from Monophysitism to the orthodox doctrine of the two natures of Christ, and his codification of Roman law.

1–9. After Constantine . . . rest on mine: Constantine the Great (306–37; see 20.55–60), the first Christian Roman emperor, began construction of Constantinople in 324 and transferred his capital there in 330. The increasingly cumbersome administration of the Empire, the western part of which was particularly exposed to barbarian invasion, had led to its division into eastern and western parts under essentially co-equal and independent "Augusti," an arrangement codified under Diocletian (284–304). Constantine and his immediate successors were the last emperors able to impose their rule throughout both parts. By the time of Justinian (born 482; emperor 527–65) the Western Empire had broken down into barbarian kingdoms: Visigoths in Spain, Franks in Gaul, Ostrogoths in Italy.

1–3. After Constantine . . . took Lavinia: The "ancient one" is of course Aeneas, who, according to the *Aeneid* (which Dante took as largely accurate history), transferred Trojan religion and legitimacy from Asia Minor to Italy (from east to west, thus following the course of the sun). These lines already establish the enormous historical purview of the canto: from Constantine back to Aeneas and forward to Justinian, to be further expanded in lines 34–111.

In the light of *Par.* 20.55–60 and *Mon.* 2.11.8, it is clear that Dante condemned not only Constantine's "Donation" (see *Inf.* 19.115–17), but also his deserting the West (thus splitting the Empire, cf. *Mon.* 3.10.8–9) and "making himself a Greek" (*Par.* 20.57), the unnaturalness of which is implied here in the mention of going against the sun (lines 1–2), though the implications are not spelled out (but note the negative suggestions of the echo of *Aen.* 3.1: "Postquam res Asiae Priamique euertere gentem / immeritam uisum superis" [After the destruction of Asia and of Priam's blameless subjects was decreed by the gods]).

1. turned the eagle back: The eagle is of course the emblem of the Roman Empire, traditionally placed atop standards borne at the head of command units in the legions; how is it to be imagined here? In *Purg.* 10.79–81 it is figured in gold on banners waving in the wind; here it seems more like an emblem on a standard or scepter, but it merges into the mythical bird itself in lines 7–9 (a process looking back to the dream of *Purg.* 9. 19–33 and forward to *Paradiso* 18–20), combined with a falconry image (the living eagle carried on the forearm, in lines 8–9, as Bellomo 1990 argues).

3. that ancient one who took Lavinia: The line refers to the wedding of Aeneas and Lavinia, the daughter of king Latinus, in settlement of the Trojan victory. "Tolse" [took] means "took in marriage," but the word contains a hint of violence (cf. line 57, with note).

4–9. twice a hundred . . . to rest on mine: From the dedication of Constantinople (330) to the accession of Justinian (527) was close to two hundred years, but not more. The eagle is "God's bird" in Dante's eyes because he considered the Roman Empire to have been providentially decreed and fostered (see the note to lines 34–96). The expression "under the shadow of its wings," asserting divine protection, is biblical: cf., e.g., Ps. 16.8: "sub umbra alarum tuarum protege me" [under the shadow of your wings protect me].

6. near the mountains . . . came forth: Constantinople was on the European side of the Bosporus, the eastern entry to the Sea of Marmora, and the site of Troy was near the Asian side of the Dardanelles, the western outlet from the Sea of Marmora.

10–29. Caesar was I . . . I should rest: Justinian gives a brief account of his reign, about which Dante's sources were ill-informed (see the note on lines 13–21). Justinian was the last emperor to make a determined effort to reestablish the power of the Empire in Italy, North Africa, and Spain. His brilliant generals Belisarius and Narses were partly successful; the exarchate of Ravenna

and the southern Adriatic coast remained under Byzantine control for several centuries, but after Justinian the rest of Italy was essentially abandoned to the Germanic Lombards (Longobardi [long beards]), originally allies of the Byzantines.

Dante's choice of Justinian as the principal spokesman for imperial institutions in the *Paradiso* is motivated partly by the contemporary importance of the revival of Roman law; but in Dante's time Ravenna preserved countless reminders of the splendor of his reign. (It remained unplundered until the French sacked the city in 1512; now everything is gone but the resplendent mosaics on the walls of churches and baptisteries; figure is a detail of the elaborate mosaic in San Vitale representing Justinian, Theodora, and the court). We do not know when Dante first visited Ravenna, but from ca. 1316 until his death he was a guest of its ruler, Guido da Polenta (see our introduction to *Inferno*).

10. Caesar was I, and I am Justinian: The soul identifies himself first by his earthly office (Caesar, i.e., the Roman emperor), then by the personal name he assumed when adopted as heir by his uncle, the emperor Justin I (as commentators note, significantly for Dante this name can be construed to mean "lover of justice" or "son of justice"). The past tense of "I was" suggests that earthly honors do not apply to the next life, unlike personal identity or merit (see *Purg.* 19.130–38). Carrai in *LDT* discusses the relation of such formulae (cf. *Purg.* 5.88 and 134, and *Par.* 3.46–51, with notes) to funerary inscriptions. However, Justinian's double naming of himself is no doubt to be connected with the "double light" that singles him out in 7.5–6 (see note there and cf. 30.133–38).

11–12. according to the will . . . within the laws: The reform of Roman law was indeed a major achievement, accomplished between 527 and 534 by a commission under Tribonianus; this commission sifted all the legislation since the time of Hadrian, publishing a series of compilations (the *Codex Iustiniani*, the *Digest*, and the *Institutes*) that had enormous influence, accounting in large part for the growth of the universities in Italy in the thirteenth century, and extending into modern times (in the form of the Napoleonic Code, the basis of law in most of western Europe except Britain; cf. the note to lines 82–90).

13–21. before I was intent . . . both false and true: Adherence to Monophysitism (the doctrine that Christ had only one nature—a divine one (Gr. *mónos* [single] plus *phýsis* [nature]) was widespread in the eastern empire (especially in Syria and Egypt), and its adherents fiercely resisted its suppression. The historical Justinian was never a Monophysite; a Latin-speaking Catholic, he repeatedly decreed theological compromises intended to foster religious uniformity between East and

West, but they only angered both Catholic and Monophysite bishops. The visit in 535 of Pope Agapetus I to Constantinople (he died while still there, in 536) did result in the deposition of the Monophysite patriarch of Byzantium, but Justinian's queen, Theodora, a fervent Monophysite, used her considerable influence to mitigate the occasional persecutions. The myth of Justinian's conversion, repeated also in Brunetto Latini's *Trésor* (one of Dante's sources), derives from Paulus Diaconus' eighth-century account of Justinian's reign (*Historia romana* 16.11–17.9); the order of his narrative can be taken to imply that the legal reforms were subsequent to the supposed conversion (the portions of the *Liber pontificalis*—papal biographies—that concern Justinian's reign were written closer to the events and are more accurate; Dante did not know them).

19–21. what was in his faith . . . both false and true: For the doctrine of the hypostatic union of the divine and human natures in Christ and its importance in the Beatific Vision, see the note to 2.37–45.

20–21. as clearly as you see . . . both false and true: In Aristotelian logic, propositions are contradictory when the truth of one implies the falsity of the other and vice versa; hence a contradiction includes both false and true. If only one of the propositions can be true but both may be false, they are contraries, not contradictories. The "law of contradiction" is a fundamental axiom of logic, undemonstrable but intuitively recognized (cf. *Purg.*18.55–60).

22–24. As soon . . . gave myself entirely: The texts of Justinian's *Institutes*, *Codex*, and other works do make repeated claims that the emperor speaks for God and that the works are divinely inspired (see Mazzoni 1979), but of course they were completed before Agapetus I's visit. Dante's version of events is coherent with his view of the prestige of Rome before the decline of the papacy.

25–27. I handed the wars . . . I should rest: Justinian never led troops in person, as was customary for the emperor to do both before and after him.

28–33. And here I put . . . who oppose it: Transition to the main theme of the canto, the reverence due to the "sacrosanct emblem," the Roman eagle. The pilgrim's "first question" is "who you are" (5.127); the second is "why . . . you occupy the sphere [of Mercury]" (5.127–29), the reply to which begins at line 112. An addition to the first reply is required by its having touched on the nature of the Roman Empire.

31–33. so that you may see . . . who oppose it: The theme of lines 34–111; note the subjunctive *veggi* [that you may see], to which the anaphoras beginning in line 34 look back.

33. both those who claim . . . who oppose it: Both parties are indentified and criticized in lines 97–111; see next note.

34–111. See how much . . . for those lilies: The argument falls into two parts: (1) the summary of Roman history, asserting the manifestly divine power of the Roman eagle, leading up to the Holy Roman Empire (lines 34–96); and (2) the denunciation of the rival parties of line 33, the Guelphs and Ghibellines (lines 97–111). This is one of the most insistently rhetorical passages in the *Comedy*; note especially the recurrent emphasis on verbs of seeing in lines 34, 86, and 91, leading up to line 97: "Now you can judge," the conclusion and transition to the second part—all designed to maneuver the listener/reader into accepting the conclusion as if he or she were an eyewitness.

34–96. See how much . . . to her aid: A brief summary of the rise of the Roman Empire according to Dante's conception of the divine plan. Dante's earliest expression of this view is in *Conv.* 4.5; its fullest expression is Book 2 of the *Monarchia* (on which he was working while writing the *Paradiso*; the relative dates of completion of the two works, as well as the extent to which their positions differ, are disputed; see Additional Note 2); both treatises proceed with formal argumentation rather than narrative, as here. Of the nineteen Roman heroes mentioned in *Conv.* 4.5, thirteen appear in this passage (Romulus—cf. 8.13—and Junius Brutus by implication); of the others, Fabricius is mentioned in *Purg.* 20.25–27, Cato figures in *Purg.* 1.31–109 and 2.129–33, and Mucius Scaevola in *Par.* 4.84. Only Camillus, Manlius, and Regulus are omitted from the *Comedy*, and Pallas, Pompey, and the Fabii are added.

Dante's views owe much to Paulus Orosius's *History against the Pagans*, but Orosius's purpose was to prove that the state of human affairs was far better in Christian times than previously: Rome and its heroes are subject in Orosius's account to the same condemnation as the Babylonian, Persian, and Alexandrian Empires, very close to Augustine's view of the Earthly City as founded in power-hunger, fratricide, and war. For Orosius, the (unique and temporary) reduction of the world to peace under Augustus was indeed the providential preparation for the coming of Christ, but for him it marked a break in the typical violent course of Roman history (see, for instance, 3.8.1–8, 6.14.1). Dante's systematic elevating of the Romans to the status of a second chosen people parallel to the Jews is foreign to Orosius (see Toynbee 1895, Toynbee 1902, Davis 1957).

This passage breaks into three segments of seven terzinas each: (1) lines 34–54; the origins to the last days of the Republic; (2) lines 55–72 and 73–75,

Julius Caesar, the founder of the Empire, and Augustus's revenge for his assassination; and (3) lines 76–96, Augustus's establishment of world peace, Christ's crucifixion under Tiberius, Titus's destruction of Jerusalem, and Charlemagne's reestablishment of the Empire (cf. the note to lines 55–90).

Note the carefully varied, unusually insistent anaphora of "you know" (lines 37, 40, 43) combined in lines 40 and 43 with "what it did," which is then maintained (in lines 58, 61, 73) until the elaborate transition of lines 82–85, where the verbs of seeing recur (lines 86 and 91); also important to the powerful effect are the repeated third-person-singular pronouns (*el*, *esso*, *il*, *gli* [it, to it] in lines 37, 43, 49, 52, 57), followed by the variation of omitting the pronoun in lines 58–81 (it is implied as the subject of the verbs), and by the appearance of the noun as explicit grammatical subject (*segno* [sign, emblem] in lines 82, 100, 102, 104; *armi* [arms, emblem] in line 111). Each of the anaphoras introduces a key stage in Roman expansion; for detailed analyses, see Mariotti 1972, Mazzoni 1979.

34–54. See how much . . . showed itself bitter: Seven terzinas from Aeneas (see line 3) to Pompey: three on the earliest period to the expulsion of the kings (lines 34–42), four on the Roman Republic (lines 43–54).

35–36. it began . . . to give it rule: One victim of the war against the Latins (*Aeneid* 7–10) is singled out (cf. *Inf.* 1.106–8): Pallas was the adolescent son of Evander, king of the Arcadians occupying the future site of Rome, allied to the Trojans; he was brutally slain, and his body boastfully despoiled, by the Rutulian Turnus, chief adversary of Aeneas (*Aeneid* 8 and 10). Note the theme of willing sacrifice for the future power of Rome (cf. the note to lines 47–48, and *Inf.* 1.106–8, with note).

37–39. dwelt in Alba . . . for its possession: Alba Longa was the first center of Trojan power in Latium, founded by Aeneas's son Ascanius; its rivalry with the second center, Rome, was settled by a combat between two teams of triplets from the two armies, in which the Romans (the Horatii) overcame the Albans (the Curiatii); Rome therefore won the eagle, the populations merged, and Alba was razed. This and the following terzina draw principally on the first book of Livy's history.

38. three hundred years and more: According to Livy's chronology, Alba was founded (in our dating) in 1155 BCE, and the victory of the Horatii and the move to Rome took place in 672 BCE, almost five hundred years later.

40–42. through seven kings . . . peoples around it: Rome's career of expansion began early. The seven kings include Romulus as the first. To provide

wives for his followers, he invited the Sabines to games, and at a signal each of his men carried off a Sabine woman; this led to a war between the two tribes, ended by the new Roman wives/mothers intervening in the battle (Livy 1.9–13; cf. Orosius 2.4.2; the *mal* of the Sabine women refers both to the wrong done them and to their sorrow). The seventh king was Tarquin the Proud, whose tyranny was bitterly resented; the rape by his son Sextus of Lucretia, wife of a patrician, followed by her suicide, led to the expulsion of the kings and the founding of the Republic (Livy's date is 509 BCE: 1.57–2.1; cf. Orosius 2.4.12–15).

44. against Brennus, against Pyrrhus: Brennus was the leader of the Gauls who occupied and burned most of Rome, ultimately defeated by Camillus (in 390, according to Livy 5.37–49; cf. Orosius 2.19.5–10); Camillus is mentioned by Dante in *Conv.* 4.5.15 and *Mon.* 2.5.12, though not here. Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, was allied with the Tarentans in the war of 281–72 (Livy 7.29 mentions Pyrrhus, but his books concerning this war are lost; Dante knew Orosius 4.1–2 and Florus's *Epitome*).

45. against the other princes and oligarchs: The princes include the Etruscan king Porsenna, won to peace in 508 BCE, and Tolumnius (435 BCE), a king of Veii; oligarchies included the Coriolans (488 BCE), Volscians (406 BCE), and others.

46–47. Torquatus . . . unkempt curls: Titus Manlius Torquatus (see *Aen.* 6.824–25, Livy 8.7, Orosius 3.9.1–4, *De civ. Dei* 1.23), repeatedly dictator and consul between 363 and 340, was famous for his rigidity, when consul in 340, in condemning his son to death for exceeding orders though achieving victory (*Conv.* 4.5.14 states Dante's view that he could have been capable of such selfless severity only with God's direct help; cf. *Mon.* 2.5.13; Livy regards his severity as barbarous). L. Quinctius Cincinnatus [curly], repeatedly dictator, was first appointed in 458 BCE, against the Sabines; a patrician whose holdings were reduced to a small farm, he was plowing when the commission arrived to notify him; before hearing them he bathed and dressed in his toga; after his great victory he resigned the dictatorship immediately, long before he was legally required to do so.

47–48. the Decii . . . gladly enmyrrh: The Fabii were a consular family from the early fifth century BCE on; three hundred six of them swore self-sacrifice in one of the wars against Veii and died to a man (479 BCE; Livy 2.46–50); Q. Fabius Rullianus (Maximus) won major victories over the Etruscans, Samnites, and Pyrrhus (327–283 BCE; Livy, Book 10); Q. Fabius Maximus Cunctator [Delayer] was dictator in Italy during the Second Punic War; his

wise policy of avoidance of pitched battles with Hannibal (217 BCE; Livy, Book 22), was eventually adopted by others (see the note to lines 49–51).

Three members of the patrician family of the Decii (a father, a son, and a nephew) deliberately sacrificed themselves in battles against the Latins, the Samnites, and Pyrrhus, in 340, 295, and 279 BCE respectively (Livy 8.9–10, 10.28–31; cf. Orosius 3.21–22). In *Mon.* 2.5.15–17 the Decii are singled out, along with Cato of Utica, as "sacred victims." Dante's coinage, *mirrare* [to enmyrrh], has been taken by virtually the entire commentary tradition to mean "to annoint with embalming oil"; it may mean "to burn incense to" (thus to praise); in either case the Christological associations are left deeply implicit (see the notes to lines 35–36): the emphasis here is on the eagle's triumphs.

49–51. It laid low . . . you glide: The term *Arabs* refers to the Carthaginians (of Phoenician origin; cf. *Aen.* 8.706) under Hannibal, who, from their bases in Spain, invaded Italy, crossing the Alps, in 217 BCE (Livy's Books 21–30 cover the Second Punic War; see next note). The source of the Po is on Monte Viso (cf. *Inf.* 16.95), some fifty miles southwest of Torino, at the northwestern extremity of the Maritime Alps, which gradually blend into the Appenines (see the map on p. 187); Hannibal's route may have passed it.

52–53. Beneath it . . . their triumphs: P. Cornelius Scipio was the chief strategist and general in the victory over Carthage; his final victory at Zama (203 BCE) won him the title *Africanus* and a triumph at the age of thirty-one (Dante celebrates it in *Inf.* 31.115–16). Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus was prominent in the wars against Marius and celebrated a triumph at age twenty-five.

53–54. and to that hill . . . showed itself bitter: The hill is that of Fiesole, which in the Middle Ages was supposed to have sided with Catiline's rebellion (63 BCE) and to have been razed in retaliation (cf. *Inf.* 15.61–63 and *Par.* 15.125–26, with notes).

55–90. Then, near the time . . . for his anger: Fourteen terzinas on the Roman Empire: six (the number associated with creation and earthly preparation) on Julius Caesar; three on Octavian/Augustus, three on Tiberius, and one on Titus, commander under Vespasian: thus seven terzinas (the number of the Sabbath day) on the years of Christ's life and death; followed by an eighth (the number of resurrection: in Christian tradition Sunday is the eighth day of the week) on Charlemagne (see the note to lines 94–96).

55–57. Then, near the time . . . will of Rome: Like Orosius, Dante regarded Julius Caesar (b. 101 BCE, active 78–44 BCE) as the first of the emperors. Note that the

providential preparation of the Empire is accomplished through the influence of the heavenly bodies (see 8.97–105 and Additional Notes 12 and 14). For the "serene measure" of the heavens as a model for society (involving both peace and law), see *Consol.* 1.m.5, 2.m.8. Note the suggestion of violence in "tolle" [took], as in line 3.

58–60. from the Var . . . fills the Rhone: Six of the rivers of France (of the most important ones only the Garonne is omitted), representing the scenes of Caesar's conquest of Gaul (59–51 BCE, covered by Orosius 6.7–12): the Var marks the southeastern boundary, the Rhine part of the northeastern; the Loire (to the west) and the Seine (to the northwest) flow into the Atlantic Ocean and the English Channel respectively; the Isère is a tributary (from the east) of the Rhone, which flows into the Mediterranean. The lines echo a passage in Florus (1.37, on the earlier victories of Domitius Ahenobarbus and Quintus Fabius Maximus): "Varus victoriae testes Isara et Vindelicus amnes, et inpiger fluminum Rhodanus" [The Var witnessed the victories and the rivers Isara and Sorgue, and the Rhone, swift among rivers].

61–72. after it came forth . . . Pompeian trumpet: Caesar's campaigns in the Civil War take up four of the six terzinas on Caesar. The selection of events and some of the phrasing in these lines is indebted to Orosius's account in 6.15–16 (Toynbee 1895, Toynbee 1902).

61–63. What it did . . . pen could follow: Ravenna is north of the river Rubicon, the frontier between Cisalpine Gaul (still a province; Roman control of northern Italy was consolidated late) and Italy proper, into which it was illegal for a commander to bring troops. Caesar had camped there to await events in Rome, and in 50 BCE, at the urging of his lieutenant Curio, he led his legions across the Rubicon, openly defying the law and the senate. Although Dante regarded Caesar as the divinely intended founder of the Empire, he assigned Curio to Hell as a sower of discord (*Inf.* 28.94–102).

64–66. Toward Spain . . . the torrid Nile: The decisive stages of the Civil War (cf. Orosius 6.15): the campaigns against Pompey's lieutenants in Spain (line 64; cf. *Purg.* 18.101–2), Dalmatia (Dyrrachium, now Durazzo, was the port on the Adriatic where Caesar besieged Pompey and his allies), and Thessaly, where the plain of Pharsalia saw the decisive battle; after which Pompey fled to Egypt, whose king, Ptolemy XIII, accepted him as a guest but had him assassinated (48 BCE).

67–68. Antandros . . . where Hector lies: According to Lucan (*Phars.* 9.950–80), on his way to Egypt Caesar stopped to visit the site of Troy. Antandros

was the port from which Aeneas set sail for the West (*Aen.* 3.6); Simois, the river on the plain of Troy, the scene of much slaughter (the first of many mentions in the *Aeneid* is at 1.100); Hector's tomb is mentioned in *Aen.* 5.371: "Tumulum quo maximus occubat Hector" [the tomb where greatest Hector lies dead]. The eagle, of course, accompanies Caesar. The founding of the empire is thus associated with a symbolic return to Troy, the origin.

69. ill it was for Ptolemy: In Egypt (cf. Orosius 6.16), Caesar, said to have wept on seeing the dead Pompey's head, deposed Ptolemy and replaced him with his sister Cleopatra, with whom he had originally reigned. Dante never mentions Caesar's affair with Cleopatra, who bore him a son, Caesarion. Ptolemy later died in battle in an attempt to regain the throne.

70–72. Thence like lightning . . . Pompeian trumpet: Juba, king of Numidia in north Africa, had supported Pompey; he was deposed after Caesar's victory at Thapsus (46 BCE) and committed suicide. "Your West" refers to Spain, where Caesar put down the remainder of Pompey's forces under his sons (Orosius 6.16.3–9).

73–81. For what it did . . . temple was barred up: The exploits of Octavian, proclaimed Augustus in 27 BCE

74–75. Brutus . . . Perugia grieved: At the battle of Philippi in Macedonia (42 BCE; Orosius 6.18), Octavian and Mark Anthony defeated Brutus and Cassius, the leaders of the conspirators who had assassinated Caesar (in *Inf.* 34. 61–67 they are punished as traitors to their lord and benefactor, along with Judas; Brutus, however, is there said to be silent in spite of his agony).

Dante seems to have been ill-informed about the complicated events involving Modena and Perugia. The sieges of both cities took place while Mark Anthony was still a triumvir, before the final break with Octavian (36–34 BCE) that led to the defeat at Actium. It was Anthony, not Octavian, who besieged Modena in 42–41 BCE (the siege was lifted when he was driven from Italy by Octavian, but they were later reconciled). Shortly afterward (41–40 BCE), Anthony's younger brother Lucius, having opposed Octavian when consul, took refuge in Perugia; after a prolonged siege Octavian took the city, permitting it to be sacked and burned, ordering the execution of its leading citizens, but sparing Lucius and his wife.

76–78. Sad Cleopatra . . . sudden, black death: Cleopatra, too, weeps because of the eagle. The naval battle of Actium (31 BCE; Orosius 6.19), the loss of which Cleopatra caused by fleeing in sudden, unexplained panic, leading to

her suicide after that of Mark Anthony, is the centerpiece of the prophetic shield made for Aeneas by Vulcan (*Aen.* 8. 671–713); it was regarded by the Romans as the definitive victory over the forces of disorder (Cleopatra is mentioned in *Inf.* 5.63 as "Cleopatràs lussurïosa" [lustful Cleopatra]).

79–81. With him it coursed . . . was barred up: The victory at Actium left all Egypt, bordered on the east by the Red Sea, in Augustus's control, along with the rest of Africa north of the Sahara. With peace established, he was able to close the gates of the temple of Janus (their opening signified war). The establishment of Rome's universal empire, imposing law, justice, and peace, for Dante prepares the coming of Christ; according to Orosius, the peace lasted only twelve years (6.22).

82–90. But what the emblem . . . vengeance for his anger: The events under Tiberius (emperor CE 19–37). In Dante's conception of the divine plan governing all human history, the central event is the atonement for Adam's sin by Christ (for the centrality, both spatial and chronological, see *Inf.* 34.112–17; *Purg.* 29.106, 30.1–12; *Purgatorio* Additional Note 15; *Par.* 30.130–32, 32.1–45, with notes).

Accepting saint Paul's theory of the redemption (Rom. 5.1–21), Dante carried it much further: in his view, Christ's sacrifice could be a legally valid punishment of Adam's sin—thus a true satisfaction of God's justice—only if the Roman Empire possessed *de jure* jurisdiction over all humanity (not merely *de facto* authority over a portion of it):

> If the Roman Empire did not exist *de jure*, Adam's sin was not punished in Christ; but this is false . . . It must be understood that *punishment* is not simply the infliction of harm but a legal penalty inflicted by those having the adequate jurisdiction; unless the penalty is inflicted by a legally appointed judge, it is not a punishment but an injury . . . If Christ did not suffer under a judge having legal jurisdiction, he did not suffer punishment [but injury]. And the legally authorized judge could only be one having jurisdiction over the entire human race, since the entire human race must be punished in the flesh assumed by Christ (*Mon.* 2.12.1, 4–5).

Medieval Eurocentrism has never been carried further.

88–90. for the living Justice . . . for his anger: The "living Justice that inspires me" is of course God himself; God himself granted the eagle (the institutional Roman Empire), in Tiberius's hand, the glory of satisfying justice by punishing Adam's sin in Christ (see Orosius 7.4). The insistence on viewing the

events with clear sight (depth and impartiality of insight) and "pure affect" (lines 86–87) is probably a warning to disregard Tiberius's reputation for corruption and paranoia and to see him and Pilate as instances of God's use of unworthy instruments (cf. 7.46–47, with note).

91–93. Now gaze long…on the ancient sin: Titus besieged Jerusalem under Vespasian, emperor 69–79 CE (cf. "later"); (see *Purg.* 21.81–84 and 23.28–30, with notes). Like virtually all medieval Christians, Dante considered the destruction of Jerusalem to have been God's punishment of the Jews for their guilt in the death of Jesus (based on Matt. 27.23, the only passage in all the Gospels in which the theme is explicit: "And the entire people answering, said: His blood be on our heads and the heads of our children"; see Orosius 7.9.1–8, Martinez 2003b, Jacoff 2004). Titus's triumph for the victory over the Jews included the display of instruments looted from the Temple in Jerusalem, some of which are portrayed on the Arch of Titus (see illustration on p. 147). The apparent contradiction of "the vengeance for the vengeance" will be explained in Canto 7.

94–96. when the Lombard fang…to her aid: The Lombards (see the note to lines 10–19) controlled most of Italy after the death of Justinian; Desiderius, their last king, persecuted the Catholics, and pope Honorius appealed to Charlemagne. Victorious against the Lombards, Charlemagne was crowned emperor in Rome on Easter Sunday in 800 CE, claiming to revive the Roman Empire, now called "Holy"; in one form or another, though much reduced, it lasted until Napoleon.

Dante's *Monarchia* and *Comedy* present a unique but distinctly medieval view of Roman history as an integral part of God's providential plans, a view based on very few historical sources—Vergil's *Aeneid*, a fragment of Livy's history of Rome, Orosius—taken as literally factual, and treating the crucifixion of Christ as a central turning point followed by a new, transfigured kind of time. Within a generation after Dante's death this view was revolutionized by the inauguration of the humanists' critical investigation of extant sources, led by Petrarch and Boccaccio, greatly augmenting the available historical materials, acknowledging the mythical nature of traditional tales, and treating both ancient events and those of Christian times as taking place in the same essentially untransfigured historical space.

97–111. Now you can judge…for those lilies: Explicit restatement of the accusation of lines 31–33; for the conflict between the Capetians and the Empire as the principal cause of the historical disasters of Dante's time, see *Purg.* 16.85–114, with notes.

100–102. One man opposes . . . errs the more: The Guelphs claim that their emblem of golden lilies (arms of the Capetians; see Fenzi 2003) takes precedence over the imperial eagle; the Ghibellines usurp the eagle for their narrow political goals rather than acting in the public interest; Dante sees the parties as equally to blame.

103–11. Let the Ghibellines . . . for those lilies: Three lines condemning the Ghibellines, but six for the Guelphs and their leader in 1300, Charles II of Anjou, king of Naples (son of Charles I of Anjou, the victor over Manfred and Corradino; cf. *Purg.* 20.67–69; he was king 1285–1309; see note on 8.31–148). Let the Ghibellines adopt a different emblem, for using the eagle to cover injustice leads to disaster, and let the Guelphs cease to oppose the Empire, for it has triumphed over stronger opponents than "this new Charles." (Note the scornful echo of "Carlo Magno" [Charles the Great]—line 95—in "esto Carlo novello"—line 106; it should be connected with the series in *Purg.* 20.67–81: "Carlo [of Anjou, line 67] . . . un altro Carlo [of Valois, line 71] . . . L'altro . . . [Charles II of Anjou, line 79])." The "claws" are those of the eagle; the "lion" may refer to Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, or to Desiderius. The last three lines warn Charles II that he may be punished for the many sins of Charles I (or, according to Buti, that his crimes may be visited on his own children—cf. Canto 8); he should not suppose that God will side with Charles and the fleur-de-lys against the eagle.

112–42. This little star . . . praise him more. The conclusion of the canto answers the pilgrim's second question, "why . . . you occupy the sphere" of Mercury (5.127–29), adding a further example of its occupants, Romeo.

112–26. This little star . . . among these wheels: Justinian, then, like Romeo, allowed his preoccupation with worldly affairs (pursued for the sake of glory and fame, worthy goals—note line 113—but lesser ones) to distract him from his love for God, and gives an explanation, closely parallel with Piccarda's (3.70–87) for the fact that his relatively low place does not diminish his beatitude.

115–17. and when desires . . . less vigorously: Implicit here is the distinction between the active life (pursued by these souls, line 113), and the contemplative (neglected by them). Note the important difference between these souls and the negligent (inactive) rulers of *Purg.* 7.91–136, such as the emperor Rudolph, "who could have healed the wounds that have killed Italy" (lines 94–95). Justinian and Romeo were only neglectful in neglecting the contemplative life

they loved less than they might have "the good of the intellect" (*Inf.* 3.18), i.e., God. To suppose that Dante is condemning the desire for glory attributed to the souls in this sphere (as in Kay 1994) is a serious mistake; compare Dante's expressions of his own desire for deserved glory in 1.22–32, 17.118–20.

118–26. that our rewards . . . among these wheels: Like Piccarda (3.70–87), the souls in Mercury rejoice in the justice of their rewards and in the wondrous order of Paradise (cf. especially 3.53–54 and 79–84 with 6.124–26). Here the emphasis is more on the intellectual recognition of God's justice and the vision of the harmony of the universe, but both equally stress their identification with God's will (3.79–81, 6.121–23).

127–42. within this present . . . praise him more: The only other soul identified in Mercury is Romeo de Villeneuve (1170–1250); he was in fact no pauper but a powerful nobleman of Catalan origin, the leading minister of Raymond Berenguer V (1204–45), the Guelph count of Provence, also a Catalan. The myth of the count's ingratitude (Romeo in fact profited handsomely in the count's service) may well have been promoted by the Angevins to discredit him and obscure his opposition to Capetian expansion (see below). Dante probably did not know the very detailed account (*Nuova cronica* 7.90) by Giovanni Villani, who seems to have begun writing after Dante's death, but in any case the story probably circulated during the lifetime of Charles of Anjou. The idea of Romeo's being a pilgrim was no doubt suggested by his given name, which however was not an unusual one (as a common noun *romeo* denoted a pilgrim to Rome; on the whole question see Busquet 1930).

Many critics have been struck by the number of parallels between this canto's version of Romeo and Dante himself: purity of motives met by the ingratitude of the powerful, exile, poverty, begging, and dependency at princely courts. That Romeo is represented as having been so successful in advancing the status of his lord might be seen as an idealizing compensation for the shipwreck of Dante's own politics. There is a parallel also with Marco Lombardo (*Purgatorio* 16), another alter ego of Dante's and a courtier, and there are important thematic parallels between these two cantos (concerning empire and papacy).

130–32. those of Provence . . . the good another does: Benvenuto comments: "They wept bitterly and often sighed after Romeo, for the officials of the French king and of Charles [of Anjou] were not so liberal and kindly toward them as Raymond and Romeo had been" (note the parallel with Pier delle Vigne, *Inf.* 13.64–69). There is no evidence of any such opposition to Romeo

at the Provençal court (Busquet 1930), but whoever may have opposed the French connection had good reason to do so. Romeo was, of course, a chief architect of Raymond Berenguer V's continual struggle to impose his authority on rebellious barons and towns.

133–35. Four daughters . . . and a foreigner: Bereft of his only son, Raymond Berenguer V was opportunistic and perhaps inconsistent in his efforts to marry his daughters to political advantage. The marriage of the eldest, Marguerite, to the nineteen-year-old Louis IX of France (1234), fostered by the French regent-mother (Blanche of Castile), seems to have been intended to enlist French support against Raymond VII of Toulouse, who had designs on Provençal lands. The second (1236), that of Eleanor to Henry III of England, rival of Louis IX, was apparently intended to balance the Capetian influence, like the third, of Sancha to Richard of Cornwall (1243), the brother of Henry III and future king of the Romans. These three were assuredly negotiated by Romeo. When Raymond Berenguer V died (19 August 1245), he had been negotiating the marriage of his last daughter, Béatriz, heir to his title, to his old rival Raymond VII of Toulouse, apparently in order to prevent Provence from becoming a Capetian appanage; these negotiations were continued by Romeo as coregent with the count's widow, Béatriz of Savoie, but she seems to have turned to the French when the emperor, Frederick II, moved a fleet toward the Provençal coast in his son Conrad's interest (Provence was an imperial fief). Louis IX sent a contingent of troops to "protect" Provençal interests, and the future Charles of Anjou married Béatriz on 31 January 1246; apparently Romeo was dismissed soon after and retired to his lands. (This summary is based on Pécout 2004). That Charles of Anjou held a grudge against Romeo seems indicated by his having seized a number of the latter's castles after Romeo's death in 1250, but Romeo's descendants prospered well into the nineteenth century (Busquet 1930).

138. who had repaid him seven and five for ten: In other words, had caused him to profit at the rate of 20%.

140–42. if the world knew . . . praise him more: That is, he was not only just but also generous and high hearted. The introduction of Romeo here at the end of the canto seems to serve several purposes: to relax the intensity of the first two-thirds of the canto, with its immense chronological and geographical scope, exalted tone, and political urgency, to contrast with ancient heroes a modern public servant who reverted to strictly private status (a kind of modern Cincinnatus; cf. the note to lines 46–49), perhaps also, after the attack on the

warring Guelphs and Ghibellines, to convey a feeling of reconciliation in Romeo's tranquil acceptance of ill treatment.

But, of course, behind the praise of Romeo lie the political realities: Louis IX and Charles of Anjou, limbs of the "evil plant" (*Purg.* 20.43), did gain control of the crucial "great dowry of Provence" (*Purg.* 20.61); note the scorn toward Charles II of Anjou in lines 106–11 of this canto. For his good intentions resulting in political disaster, Dante's Romeo seems parallel to Constantine (cf. *Purg.* 20.61, *Par.* 20.55–60). Even if lines 133–35 indicate that Dante was unaware of the French intervention in Charles's favor, the entire passage is very hard to reconcile with Dante's bitter anti-Capetianism (*Purgatorio* 20; see Fenzi 2003), and it is odd that he seems not to have recognized the tendentiousness of the Romeo legend.

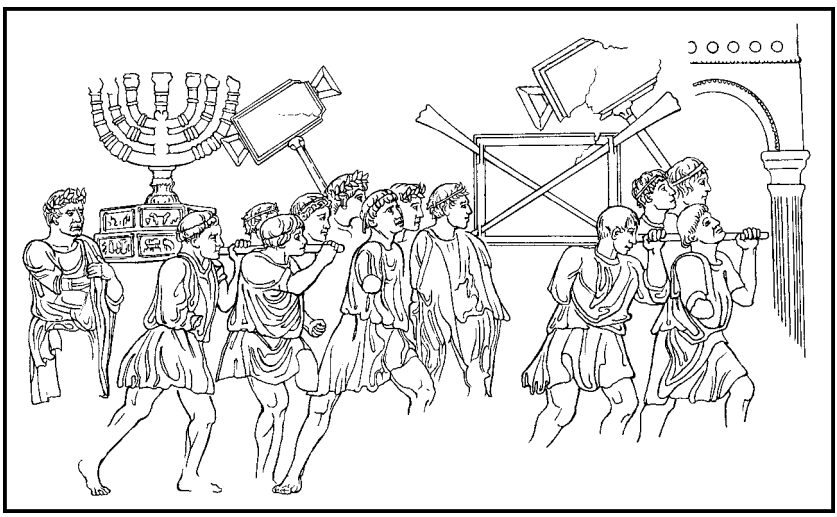

Figure 5. Furniture from the Temple in Jerusalem carried in triumph by the Romans

CANTO 7

"Osanna, sanctus Deus sabaòth, 1
superillustrans claritate tua
felices ignes horum malacòth!"
Così, volgendosi a la nota sua, 4
fu viso a me cantare essa sustanza,
sopra la qual doppio lume s'addua,
ed essa e l'altre mossero a sua danza, 7
e quasi velocissime faville
mi si velar di sùbita distanza.
Io dubitava, e dicea: "Dille, dille," 10
fra me, "dille," dicea, "a la mia donna,
che mi diseta con le dolci stille."
Ma quella reverenza che s'indonna 13
di tutto me, pur per *Be* e per *ice*,
mi richinava come l'uom ch' assonna.
Poco sofferse me cotal Beatrice, 16
e cominciò, raggiandomi d'un riso
tal che nel foco faria l'uom felice:
"Secondo mio infallibile avviso, 19
come giusta vendetta giustamente
punita fosse, t'ha in pensier miso,
ma io ti solverò tosto la mente; 22
e tu ascolta, ché le mie parole
di gran sentenza ti faran presente.
Per non soffrire a la virtù che vole 25
freno a suo prode, quell'uom che non nacque,
dannando sé, dannò tutta sua prole;
onde l'umana specie inferma giacque 28
giù per secoli molti in grande errore,
fin ch' al Verbo di Dio discender piacque

CANTO 7

Mercury, continued: just vengeance punished—theory of the Atonement —direct and indirect creation

"Osanna, sanctus Deus sabaòth
superillustrans claritate tua
felices ignes horum malacòth!"
Thus, revolving to his notes, this substance seemed to me to sing, on whom double light is twinned,
and he and the others moved in their dance and like flying sparks veiled themselves from me with sudden distance.
I was in doubt, saying, "Tell her, tell her!" within myself, "tell her," I was saying, "tell my lady, who slakes my thirst with her sweet distillings."
But that reverence that dominates me utterly, even for *Be* and for *ice*, was bending me like one falling asleep.
Beatrice suffered me so but a little while, and she began, shining on me with a smile that would make one happy in the fire:
"According to my infallible awareness, how a just vengeance could be justly punished, is puzzling you,
but I will quickly free your mind; and do you listen, for my words will make you the gift of a great principle.
For not enduring any rein upon the power that wills, though for his good, that man who was not born in damning himself damned all his offspring;
therefore the human race lay weak for many centuries in great error, until it pleased the Word of God to descend

u' la natura, che dal suo Fattore
s'era allungata, unì a sé in persona
con l'atto sol del suo etterno amore.
Or drizza il viso a quel ch' or si ragiona:
questa natura al suo Fattore unita,
qual fu creata, fu sincera e buona,
ma per sé stessa pur fu ella sbandita
di Paradiso, però che si torse
da via di verità e da sua vita.
La pena dunque che la Croce porse
s' a la natura assunta si misura,
nulla già mai sì giustamente morse,
e così nulla fu di tanta ingiura,
guardando a la persona che sofferse,
in che era contratta tal natura.
Però d'un atto uscir cose diverse:
ch' a Dio e a' Giudei piacque una morte;
per lei tremò la terra e 'l Ciel s'aperse.
Non ti dee oramai parer più forte
quando si dice che giusta vendetta
poscia vengiata fu da giusta corte.
Ma io veggi' or la tua mente ristretta
di pensiero in pensier dentro ad un nodo
del qual con gran disio solver s'aspetta:
tu dici: 'Ben discerno ciò ch'i' odo,
ma perché Dio volesse, m'è occulto,
a nostra redenzion pur questo modo.'
Questo decreto, frate, sta sepulto
a li occhi di ciascuno il cui ingegno
ne la fiamma d'amor non è adulto.
Veramente, però ch' a questo segno
molto si mira e poco si discerne,
dirò perché tal modo fu più degno.
La divina bontà, che da sé sperne
ogne livore, ardendo in sé, sfavilla
sì che dispiega le bellezze etterne.
Ciò che da lei sanza mezzo distilla
non ha poi fine, perché non si move
la sua imprenta quand' ella sigilla.

where the nature that had gone far from its
Maker he united with himself, in one Person,
with the sole act of his eternal love.

Now direct your sight to what is said next: this
nature united with its Maker was pure and good
when it was created,

but still it had banished itself from Paradise,
because it turned aside from the way of truth
and from its life.

No punishment, therefore, if measured by
the nature that was assumed, ever took its toll
so justly as did the Cross,

and in the same way none was ever so
unjust, considering the Person who suffered, in
whom that nature had been assumed.

Thus from one act issued different things: for
the same death pleased both God and the Jews;
because of it earth shook and Heaven was opened.

No longer now should it seem difficult to you
when it is said that a just vengeance was later
avenged by a just court.

But now I see your mind caught, from thought
to thought, within a knot from which with great
desire it hopes to loose itself:

You say: 'I discern clearly what I have heard,
but why God should choose just this way to our
redemption is hidden from me.'

This decree, brother, lies buried from the
eyes of anyone whose wit has not matured in
the flame of love.

But truly, because many aim at this target but
discern little in it, I will say why that manner was
the most worthy.

God's goodness, which spurns all envy,
aflame within itself, flashes forth unfolding the
eternal beauties.

Whatever flows from it without intermediary
has no end, because when it seals, the stamp
cannot be removed.

Ciò che da essa sanza mezzo piove
libero è tutto, perché non soggiace
a la virtute de le cose nove.
Più l'è conforme, e però le piace,
ché l'Ardor santo ch'ogne cosa raggia,
ne la più somigliante è più vivace.
Di tutte queste dote s'avvantaggia
l'umana creatura, e s'una manca
di sua nobilità convien che caggia.
Solo il peccato è quel che disfranca
e falla dissimìle al sommo Bene
per che del lume suo poco s'imbianca,
e in sua dignità mai non rivene
se non rïempie, dove colpa vòta,
contra mal dilettar con giuste pene.
Vostra natura, quando peccò *tota*
nel seme suo, da queste dignitadi,
come di Paradiso, fu remota,
né ricovrar potiensi, se tu badi
ben sottilmente, per alcuna via,
sanza passar per un di questi guadi:
o che Dio solo per sua cortesia
dimesso avesse, o che l'uom per sé isso
avesse sodisfatto a sua follia.
Ficca mo l'occhio per entro l'abisso
de l'etterno consiglio, quanto puoi
al mio parlar distrettamente fisso:
non potea l'uomo ne' termini suoi
mai sodisfar, per non poter ir giuso
con umiltate obedïendo poi
quanto disobediendo intese ir suso;
e questa è la cagion per che l'uom fue
da poter sodisfar per sé dischiuso.
Dunque a Dio convenia con le vie sue
riparar l'omo a sua intera vita,
dico con l'una o ver con l'amendue.
Ma perché l'ovra tanto è più gradita
da l'operante quanto più appresenta
de la bontà del core ond' ell' è uscita,

That which rains from it without intermediary
is entirely free, for it does not lie subject to the
power of created things.
This most resembles him, and thus it pleases
him most, for the holy Ardor that radiates all
things is liveliest in what most resembles it.
With all these gifts the human creature is
privileged, and if one of them is lacking, it must
fall from its nobility.
Sin alone is what disenfranchises it and
makes it dissimilar from the highest Good, so
that the Light brightens it but little,
and it can never regain its high worth, if it
does not fill what guilt has emptied, with just
penalty in exchange for evil pleasure.
Your nature, when it sinned *tota* in its seed,
was expelled from these dignities, as from
Paradise,
nor could they be recovered in any way, if you
consider subtly, without passing across one of
these fords:
either that God alone in his liberality should
forgive, or that man by himself should atone for
his folly.
Probe with your eye now within the abyss of
the eternal counsel, as fixed as you can be
upon what I say:
man could not, within his limits, ever atone,
since he could not descend with obedient
humility afterwards
as far as in his disobedience he earlier intended
to rise up; and this is the reason why man was
excluded from being able to atone by himself.
Therefore it was left to God to restore man to
the fullness of life, I say with one or else with
both his ways.
But because a work is the more pleasing to
the workman the more it expresses the goodness
of heart from which it issues,

la divina bontà, che 'l mondo imprenta,
di proceder per tutte le sue vie
a rilevarvi suso fu contenta.
Né tra l'ultima notte e 'l primo die
sì alto o sì magnifico processo,
o per l'una o per l'altra, fu o fie:
ché più largo fu Dio a dar sé stesso
per far l'uom sufficiente a rilevarsi,
che s'elli avesse sol da sé dimesso,
e tutti li altri modi erano scarsi
a la giustizia, se 'l Figliuol di Dio
non fosse umilïato ad incarnarsi.
Or per empierti bene ogne disio
ritorno a dichiararti in alcun loco,
perché tu veggi lì così com' io.
Tu dici: 'Io veggio l'acqua, io veggio il foco,
l'aere e la terra e tutte lor misture
venire a corruzione e durar poco,
e queste cose pur furon creature;
per che, se ciò ch' è detto è stato vero,
esser dovrien da corruzion sicure.'
Li angeli, frate, e 'l paese sincero
nel qual tu se', dir si posson creati
sì come sono, in lor essere intero,
ma li alimenti che tu hai nomati
e quelle cose che di lor si fanno
da creata virtù sono informati.
Creata fu la materia ch' elli hanno,
creata fu la virtù informante
in queste stelle che 'ntorno a lor vanno.
L'anima d'ogne bruto e de le piante
di complession potenzïata tira
lo raggio e 'l moto de le luci sante,
ma vostra vita sanza mezzo spira
la somma Beninanza, e la innamora
di sé sì che poi sempre la disira.
E quinci puoi argomentare ancora vostra
resurrezion, se tu ripensi come l'umana carne
fessi allora che li primi parenti intrambo fensi."

the divine Goodness that stamps the world
was happy to proceed by all its ways to raise
you up again.
Nor between the last night and the first day
has there been or will there be so high and so
magnificent a going forth, by either way:
for God was more liberal in giving himself in
order to make mankind sufficient to raise itself
up, than if he had simply forgiven,
and all other ways fell short of justice, if the Son
of God had not humbled himself to become flesh.
Now, to fulfill all your desire, I return to clarify
some places for you, that you may see them just
as I do.
You say: 'I see water, I see fire, air, and
earth, and all their compounds, come to
corruption, lasting little,
but these things, too, were created; for this
reason, if what was said is true, they should be
exempt from corruption.'
The angels, brother, and the pure realm
where you are now, can be said to have been
created just as they are, whole in their being,
but the elements that you have named, and
the things made from them, receive form from
created powers.
Created was the matter in them, created was
the informing power in these stars that revolve
about them.
The soul of every beast and every plant is
drawn forth from some potentiated compound
by the shining and the motion of the holy lights,
but the highest Love breathes your life into
you without intermediary, and so enamors it of
himself that ever after it desires him.
And thence you can take further evidence of
your resurrection, if you think back how human
flesh was made
when the first parents were both made."

NOTES

1–9. Osanna . . . sudden distance: Justinian's acclamation confirms the praise Romeo merits in Heaven (see 6.140–42 and notes), after which Justinian and the other blessed in Mercury depart (see 3.121–23, 4.28–36, 9.7–9 and notes).

1–3. Osanna . . . malacoth [O save, Holy God of armies, illuminating with your brightness from above the happy fires of these realms]: The words of praise and victory link Rome's conquests in Canto 6, which prepared the birth of Christ, with the subject of this canto: the purpose of Christ's life on earth (see also 8.28 and note). One of three mostly Latin terzinas in the poem (see 15.28–30, *Purg.* 33.10–12 and notes), only this one opens a canto; the verses contrast with Plutus's babble at *Inf.* 7.1–3. Hebrew words occupy three of the four extremes of the terzina; the last word is a mistake for *mamlacoth* [realms]. See Additional Note 4.

5–7. this substance seemed to me to sing . . . moved in their dance: For the dance of the blessed and the dance of the stars, see Freccero 1968 and Miller 1986.

6. on whom double light is twinned: Early commentators saw the doubling as reflecting Justinian's achievements in both arms and the law, but given 6.25–27 (see note), a twinned blessing of Justinian as both man and corporate person, both soul in glory and anointed emperor, the *gemina persona* of the sovereign, has a stronger basis (see Kantorowicz 1957). Jacoff 1985 cites *Aen.* 8.680, where the emperor Augustus's temples seem to radiate twin flames [*geminas . . . flammas*].

10–12. Tell her, tell her . . . sweet distillings: Stuttering alliteration (lines 10–11), and the self-address that cues the pilgrim's aside to himself, reflect how doubt makes us of two minds. The pilgrim's desire to see Beatrice again was a "ten year's thirst" (*Purg.* 32.2 and note; also 31.127–29); and cf. also *Purg.* 21.1–4 and note.

13–18: but that reverence . . . happy in the fire: These lines allude to the pilgrim's history with Beatrice, from the *Vita nova* to the pilgrim's passage of the fire (*Purg.* 27.10–57; see also *Inf.* 1.118–19); that the lady's mercy might soothe a lover in Hell was a topic of vernacular lyric.

14: even for *be* and for *ice*: A single syllable of Beatrice's name stuns the pilgrim. The syllabification recalls the force of her name in Dante's work (see *VN* 24.8, where the nickname *Bice* appears in a sonnet). Here her name rhymes, in a sense, with itself (lines 14, 16; compare 12.73, 26.17 and notes, and see Additional Note 1). Beatrice's "infallible view" (19) is emphasized as she begins a major speech.

19–148. According to . . . both fashioned: In 130 lines, the length of a canto (cf. Canto 3), Beatrice unfolds the *gesta* of human salvation, the "great principle" (line 24) and "so magnificent a going forth" (line 113) of God's work; hers is the longest continuous discourse in the poem except for Justinian's in the previous canto.

Anselm, abbot of Bec, later archbishop of Canterbury (1033–1109; see 12.136–38 and note), though unnamed in discussions of the Incarnation by Peter Lombard and Aquinas, is the acknowledged authority in Chapter 53 of the *Golden Legend*; Dante, too, with key shifts of emphasis, follows Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* [Why God became man], *pace* Ryan 1995, Muresu 1997; see Fallani 1989.

19–52. According to . . . by a just court: Beatrice explains (lines 19–21) Justinian's riddling words on Jerusalem's destruction by Titus (6.92–93 and note), and gives a brief account of creation, original sin, the punishment of mankind, and its reconciliation through the Incarnation and Atonement (lines 25–33). The union of two natures in Christ, who is both the second Adam and God, explains why his death on the cross was both just and unjust (lines 34–51; see also *Conv.* 4.5.3–20 and *Mon.* 2.10–11). Mention of the goodness of creation prepares later stages of the argument (34–36). The supposed guilt and punishment of the Jews (line 47; cf. 6.91–93 and note) figures in discussions of the atonement (cf. *CDH* 1.18 [385A], 2.15 [415C]; *ST* 3a. q. 47 a. 3).

20–21. how a just vengeance could be justly punished: Reiterated at lines 51–52. For the reasoning behind the apparent paradox, see *Par.* 6.82–90 and note. Beatrice's explanation further answers the pilgrim's query at 4.67–79; see also 19.77 and note.

25–26: For not enduring any rein upon the power that wills: Note the echoes of Purgatory, realm of the correction of the will, where Dante defines both human resistance to tendencies instilled by the stars (*Purg.* 16.94 and notes) and the role of the empire as "bit and bridle" guiding human impulses (see *Purg.* 6.88–99 and notes; *Mon.* 3.4.14, 3.16.9).

26–27: that man who was not born . . . damned all his offspring: Created directly by God, Adam was never born (*DVE* 1.6.1; *Mon.* 1.16.1), a crucial datum for Dante's exposition (see lines 145–48 and notes). Based in part on Lam. 5.7 and Rom. 5.12 ("As by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men"), Christians believed that Adam's sin was transmitted to his descendants. See lines 85–87 and note.

28–30. therefore the human race lay weak . . . to descend: The prostration of humankind in the infirmity of sin recalls the condition of souls in Limbo awaiting Christ (*Inf.* 4.52–63 and note). Compare also *Purg.* 6.149–51 and notes.

28. weak: Dante's view that original sin weakens human nature is sharply distinct from Augustine's view that original sin has so corrupted human nature that any right action of the will is impossible without grace (see *Purg.* 16.64–129, 91–93 and notes, and our introduction to *Purgatorio*, pp. 6–10).

30. until it pleased the Word of God to descend: Compare the Nicene Creed, "Propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis" [for our salvation he came down from the heavens].

31–33. where the nature . . . his eternal love: The Incarnation joins the Word and human nature in marriage. See 11.31–33, 115–17 and notes.

34–39: Now direct your sight . . . from its life: Reiterating in reverse order the sense of lines 29–33 (where alienation precedes reunion), these lines balance man's free choice of sin with Christ's choice to be incarnate and crucified ("it pleased," line 30). Line 39 echoes "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14.6).

40–51. No punishment . . . a just court: Christ's death was just because culpable human nature was punished; but unjust because Christ, though innocent of sin, suffered on the Cross. The diverse reception of the Atonement (lines 46–48) recalls Caiaphas's unwitting and partial statement of the logic of Christ's sacrifice (John 18.14; see *Inf.* 23.115–23 and notes; also *Purg.* 22.38–44 and notes); see also Additional Note 2.

46–47. Thus from one act . . . pleased God and the Jews: Compare Anselm, *CDH* 1.7 (368A), distinguishing between the right of God and that of the devil to inflict harm on man: "Thus from different points of view, the same action is just and unjust, and it may happen that one may judge it to be wholly

just, another wholly unjust." God approves the death of Christ because it redeems Adam's sin (cf. *CDH* 1.10 [374B–75A], "since therefore the will of the Son [to be sacrificed] pleased the Father"); while the Jews' supposed ill will is satisfied with the death of a blasphemer. For the role of the chief priests (the Sanhedrin) in the death of Christ, see *Inf.* 23.115–23 and notes (also *ST* 3a q. 47 a. 3, and see Martinez 2003b).

48. because of it earth shook and Heaven was opened: A reference to the earthquake at the Crucifixion (see Matt. 27.51–53; *Purg.* 20.127–29, 21.7–15 and notes) and to the relaxation of the decree sending mankind to Hell after the fall of Adam (see *Purg.* 10.34–36 and notes). See *ST* 3a q. 49 a. 5: "Through the Passion of Christ the gates of the kingdom of heaven [*ianua regni caeli*] are open to us."

51. a just court: The court is just because Rome had lawfully acquired world empire, giving it standing to pass judgment on Christ; see note to *Purg.* 6.82–90, *Mon.* 2.8–11, and Additional Note 2.

52–120. But now I see your mind . . . humbled himself to become flesh: Beatrice answers the pilgrim's question regarding God's choice of means in redeeming man (52–60). The pilgrim's question, implying God's choice in the matter, is foreign to Anselm, who claimed the Incarnation was necessary; but the answer to the question is akin to Anselm in basing the need for the Incarnation on the axiom that man's dignity—the divine likeness conferred by God's creation of him—although partially effaced through sin, must be fully restored (61–84). Such restoration could be achieved through God's largesse in forgiving sin, or if humankind itself made satisfaction for its error (85–93), but the latter could not be achieved, because in its weakened state mankind could not sufficiently humble itself so as to expiate its presumption and satisfy God's justice (97–102), while the former, simple forgiveness, comes short of justice (implied in 118–19). It remains for God to compass man's salvation in *both* ways: first, through his largesse, in the gift of his son, who freely chooses to pay for human sin; and second, in providing a heroic son of man capable of restoring his own human seed (106–11). Justice is satisfied and divine generosity expressed (106–19).

52–57. But now I see . . . is hidden from me: Beatrice, reading the pilgrim's mind (see also lines 124–27) and both voicing and answering his questions, makes her discourse into a dialogue, like Anselm's with his disciple Boso in *CDH*. The pilgrim proposes a question much like Anselm's (*CDH* 1.1 [361C]):

"By what necessity and reason God was made man [*Deus homo factus sit*] and has, by his death, as we confess and believe, brought life back to the world."

52–54. But now I see . . . to loose itself: The problem is a knot, like others in the poem: Farinata's knowledge of the future (*Inf.* 10.95), the obstacle to other poets writing as well as Dante (*Purg.* 24.55), the appearance of circles in the Trinity (*Par.* 33.115–25), and the union of the two natures in Christ, implicit in the question here.

58–60. This decree . . . the flame of love: The "decree" is the plan of the Incarnation, manifest in Gabriel's offer of the "decree of peace" to the earth (*Purg.* 10.34–35), reversing "the handwriting of the decree that was against us" (Colossians 2.14; cf. *CDH* 1.7 [368B]). Dante emphasizes God's love as a cause of the decision to save man through the Incarnation (John 3.16), a view explicit in Aquinas (*ST* 3a q. 46 a. 3) as well as in Anselm: *CDH* 1.3 (364B): "He showed love [*dilectionem*] and compassion for us." That only those who know God's love can understand any love at all informs the *stilnovo* formula (*VN* 26.7; see 3.37–39 and note).

64–66: God's goodness . . . eternal beauties: These lines echo "O qui perpetua" 4–6 (see note, p. 689) and its source in the *Timaeus* (see also 2.130–32, 5.19–21, 13.52–87, and 29.13–14 and notes). The fire imagery (see also line 74) continues the idea of love as the motive of creation; cf. *Inf.* 1.39–40, and *Par.* 33.145 and notes. For God's goodness as creator, see Aquinas, *CG* 2.46, *ST* 1a q. 19 a. 2.

67–75: Whatever flows from it . . . what most resembles it: This passage prepares Beatrice's answer to the pilgrim's last question (121–48): God's direct creation of man (line 73) imprints his image indelibly (67–69; for the metaphor of the seal in wax, see *Purg.* 10.45, 18.39, 25.95–96, 33.79; *Par.* 1.41, 8.128, 13.67, 73 and notes; see also 9.96 and note). As a result, the human intellect, and ultimately the will, have the possibility to act freely, despite the influence of the planets, which are created things, thus secondary causes (see *Purg.* 16.73–81 and notes, and Additional Note 2). The dignity of direct creation underlies Anselm's account of the necessity of the redemption of mankind (*CDH* 1.5 [365C]: "That dignity, that he should have had, had he not sinned"; see note to lines 121–48 below).

74. The holy Ardor that radiates all things: One of names for God in this canto, which include the Word [*Verbo*, line 30]; the maker [*fattor*, lines 31, 35]; highest Good [*sommo Bene*, line 80]; highest Love [*somma Beninanza*, line 143,

a hapax legomenon in the poem], as well as God [*Dio*, lines 47, 103, 115] and son of God [*figlio di Dio*, 119]. "Ardor" may emphasize how Love, a name for the Holy Spirit, is said to motivate the creation, as it did the Redemption; but both divine acts are works of the Trinity (see 13.52–60, 29.22–30 and notes; *Inf.* 1.39–40, 3.5–6 and note).

76–84: With all these gifts . . . evil pleasure: An itemized reversal of the points in previous terzinas: sin weakens man, reducing his dignity and privileges (76–79; feudal and social status metaphors), especially his resemblance to God (73–75, light metaphors), and his full dignity cannot be restored unless his rebellion is punished (82–84, judicial metaphor; cf. *CDH* 1.11–12); "evil pleasure," the result of man's errant will, echoes the hatred imputed to the Jews in lines 46–48 and contrasts with the *placet* of God's consent to the Atonement (line 47).

77–78. it must fall from its nobility: For the human soul as intrinsically "noble," see *Conv.* 3.2.5–6; Aquinas, *CG* 2.72.

83. if it does not fill what guilt has emptied: The terms echo the discussion of vows, "empty" if not kept (see 3.30, 5.57 and notes); see note to lines 97–102.

85–93. Your nature . . . atone for his folly: Either God one-sidedly dismisses all charges and penalties, or man atones for his own sin.

85–87. Your nature . . . as from Paradise: The dogma of original sin teaches that all men shared in Adam's sin, just as all men could be redeemed in Christ. Line 85 has a parallel in Anselm (*CDH* 1.18 [387B]): "Since human nature in its entirety [*tota*] was in the first parents, it was in its entirety [*tota*] defeated and prone to sin." Line 87 implies a parallel between Heaven and the psychological state of innocence, as maintained by Eurigena and other Greek authors, for whom Eden is a metaphor or allegory; see *Purg.* 28.25–33 and notes.

90. without passing across one of these fords: The metaphor, referring to fording a body of water (usually a stream or river), vividly highlights the recurring references to the atonement as a *via* or way (lines 89, 103, 110), and a procession (113). The "long way" (*Inf.* 4.22. *Purg.* 5.131) of the pilgrim's journey, which includes "fords" (*Inf.* 11.31, *Purg.* 32.28, *Par.* 2.126 and note), is itself part of the "way" opened by Christ.

91. either that God alone in his liberality: Liberality translates *cortesia*, literally "courtliness," one of a family of terms ("magnificent," line 113; "generous"

[*largo*], line 115; and, of man's diminished freedom because of sin [*disfranca*], line 79) that help imagine Heaven as like a feudal court; cf. *Inf.* 1.128; *Par.* 5.19, 9.58; 25.17, 42 and notes. God is "Lord of courtliness" [*sire della cortesia*] at *VN* 42.3; see also *Conv.* 4.20.6, *Inf.* 16.67, *Purg.* 16.116. Dante differs from Anselm in emphasizing God's "courtly" generosity, rather than his compassion [*misericordia*]. See Muresu 1997, and cf. *Par.* 8.82–83, 17.85 and note.

92. forgive: Gmelin suggests Dante's use of this word [*dimesso*] echoes Anselm's treatise, echoing his many uses of *dimittere*, *dimittitur* (*CDH* 1.12, *passim*); but the word is also used in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive [*dimitte*] our sins."

97–102. man could not . . . atone by himself: The two uses of "atone" (lines 98 and 102; and see line 93) correspond to Dante's *sodisfare* [satisfy], previously used to discuss fulfilling vows; Christ's atonement is the archetype of the sacrifice involved in the keeping of vows (see 5.62 and note, and *CDH* 2.5 (403B). See also *CDH* 1.11 (377A): "Thus should everyone who sins pay the penalty for stealing the honor of God: and this is satisfaction." See Additional Note 8).

98–100. he could not descend . . . intended to ascend: Just as vengeance answers vengeance in regard to the pilgrim's original question (lines 19–21), here obedience is pitched against disobedience, humble descent to proud ascent. Christ's sacrifice is the ultimate model of the pilgrim's descent to Hell in order to ascend in the course of the journey (see Additional Note 4, *Inf.* 1.91 and notes, our introduction to *Inferno*, and *Inferno* Additional Note 16). Commentators cite Richard of St. Victor: "For the completeness of satisfaction it was necessary that the humiliation in the expiation be as great as had been the presumption in the prevarication" (*Liber de verbo incarnato* 8).

99. obedient humility: Since only a willing offer by one who is both man and God can satisfy the requirements of justice, Christ's obedience to God's will in sacrificing himself for mankind is the keystone of Anselm's argument; see *CDH* 1.8–9, 1.20, and *ST* 3a q. 47 a. 2: "It was most necessary that Christ suffer out of obedience." For the relevance in the canto of Paul's Epistle to the Philippians 2.5–11, see note to line 119.

106–8. But because a work . . . from which it issues: "Work" [*ovra*] identifies this as a reference to the Creator as craftsman, a topic in medieval accounts of creation (see *Purg.* 25.70–72 and note, *Purg.* 26.115–17, note and *Inter cantica* there); the idea includes the reference to an imprint in line 109.

109–11: the divine Goodness . . . raise you up again: *Bontà* [Goodness] is for Pseudo-Dionysius one of the names of God (*De nom. div.* 4.1–4); here it echoes the "goodness of heart" of the workman in line 108, as well as earlier references (lines 64, 80, and 143). See note to 29.18.

111. raise you up again: "Raise up" [*rilevare*] and "restore" [*riparare*, line 104] are found in Anselm. See *CDH* 2.21 (431A): "It would have been impossible for man to be raised up [*relevari*] by another man, if he were not of the same human species"; and 1.19 (391B): "Not then in this way is man restored [*reparaterur*]."

112–14: Nor between the last night . . . by either way: Performed in "both ways" (line 105), the Incarnation and Atonement are the supremely magnificent actions in history. Dante's *hysteron proteron* puts the last night of created time before the first day of creation, echoing the contiguous nights and days of Genesis (1.5, 1.8, 1.13, etc.), and collapsing time into a single day.

115–19. for God was more liberal . . . to become flesh: Although the emphasis on God's liberality is not in Anselm, the insistence on the Incarnation as the only suitable way of effecting the redemption of mankind, other means being found lacking (*scarsi*), is Anselmian in premise and conclusion. See *CDH* 1.3 (364C) and 2.20 (430AB): "As to the mercy of God that seemed to vanish when we considered man's sin and God's justice, we find that it is so great and so in accord with justice that neither a greater nor a more just could be conceived."

119. if the son of God had not humbled himself to become flesh: Statement of a central Christian teaching concludes Beatrice's discourse. The line echoes Philippians 2.5–11, on Christ's self-abasement ("He emptied himself") in the Incarnation and Crucifixion. Both the verb for Christ's humbling of himself [*umiliato*, from *umiliare*] and for his Incarnation [*incarnarsi*] are used only here in Dante's poem (see also line 146). For Philippians 2.5–11 in Anselm, where it anchors the argument, see *CDH* 1.9 (four times); in *ST* 3a q. 46 a. 4 and q. 47 a. 2 it decides the question. See also 11.111–12 and note.

121–48. Now to fulfill all your desire . . . were both made: Since the four created elements and their compounds—which compose all material substances on earth—perish, how is it that they, if created as man is, are not also perpetual, like man? (lines 124–29). Beatrice distinguishes humankind, the angels, and the system of the heavens, created directly by God and thus perpetual in their existence, from the elements and their compounds, including the souls of

plants and animals, formed in their being by the secondary causes of the stars and planets, guided by angelic intelligences (133–41). The elements are thus subject to corruption and extinction, but original prime matter and the first qualities (hot, dry, wet, cold) are not (see *Conv.* 3.3.2–5, Moore 1896-1917). It follows that man, made directly in God's image, will enjoy eternal life after the resurrection of the body (142–48). Beatrice's answer is crucial, since the restoration of humankind derives from its original dignity as God's creation. This is also Anselm's premise, stated in a passage that Moore 1896–1917, vol. 4, claimed influenced Dante (*CDH* 2.3 [402A]): "It needs be that . . . when he [man] is restored, he will be restored in his body, which he lived in this life."

124–29. You say . . . exempt from corruption: In this last exchange of Beatrice's "dialogue" with the pilgrim, his unspoken words constitute an objection, as in a scholastic problem [*quaestio*]; her answer employs a scholastic distinction. Mutability is expressed "scientifically"; but see Is. 40.6 ("All flesh is grass").

130–45. The angels . . . after it desires him: In five terzinas, Beatrice offers an account of corruptible created being (three terzinas, lines 133–41) bracketed on both sides by one terzina on incorruptible being (lines 130–132, the angels and heavens, and 142–44, man). Rhetorical order mirrors metaphysical: what is active and immutable (see line 138) contains and fashions the passive and mutable (cf. *Par.* 29.16–36, and *Ep.* 13.65: "As is evident in regard to heaven and the elements, of which heaven is incorruptible, while the elements are corruptible.")

130–32. The angels . . . whole in their being: Dante uses "pure realm" of the heavens because *sincero* means unmixed, (cf. 6.17 and note). Although compounds of form and matter, the heavens are not fashioned from the four elements, but from a subtle fifth element, aether [*etera*]; see 22.132, 27.70.

136–38. Created was the matter . . . stars that revolve about them: The two uses of "created" here (see also lines 127, 131, and 135), are the last in the canto (cf. lines 36, 77). See also uses of *Fattor* ("Maker" 31, 35) and especially *fare* ("to make"), which in this and the preceding canto comprise some eighteen occurrences. The lines closely associate the turning heavens with God's larger creative plan, his providential "intention" (see 29.22–36 and notes). For line 138, cf. *Conv.* 3.12.8–11; *Mon.* 2.2.2–3; and *Par.* 8.34–49, 9.103–8 and notes.

139–41. The soul of every beast . . . motion of the holy lights: The heavenly bodies through their motions and their light actualize the potential of the mixtures of elements that make up the physical world ("potentiated compounds"

include everything made from the simple bodies that are the elements: from minerals to the further compounded higher animals, including human embryos before they are ensouled); formed and brought to act, these potentials constitute the vital principles, or souls, of animals and of plants (as well as the properties of minerals and gems). Cf. *ST* 1a. q. 75 a. 6; 1a q. 91 a. 2; *Conv.* 2.13.5; 4.21.4; 4.23.3, 7, 12–14; *Mon.* 1.3.6; and *Purg.* 25.52–60 and notes.

142–44. but the highest Love . . . after it desires him: Restates *Purg.* 16.85–93 and 25.67–78 (see notes), which echo Gen. 2.7, "God breathed into his [Adam's] nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul"; cf. *Conv.* 4.21.4–5.

145–48. And thence . . . were both made: Further emphasis on God's direct creation, which means the human body is also destined for immortality. Dante's "were . . . fashioned" [*fensi*] is the last of the verbs derived from *fare* ("to make") in Mercury (see note to 136–38), reiterating the dignity of humankind because of its resemblance to its Creator. See *CDH* 2.1 (401C): "Therefore the man who is of rational nature, was made just [*factus est justus*] to this end, that he should be blessed in the enjoyment of God [*ut Deo fruendo beatus esset*]."

146. your resurrection: The term for the return from death to eternal life, which is the hope of Christianity, occurs only here in the poem (though Statius in Purgatory appears like Christ risen from the tomb; see *Purg.* 21.7–15 and note). Anselm also uses the word just once in his treatise (*CDH* 2.3 [401D]): "From this truth [if man had not sinned, he would never have suffered death] a future resurrection of the dead is clearly proven." And see 1 Cor. 15.51–53.

CANTO 8

Solea creder lo mondo in suo periclo
che la bella Ciprigna il folle amore
raggiasse, volta nel terzo epiciclo,
per che non pur a lei faceano onore
di sacrificio e di votivo grido
le genti antiche ne l'antico errore,
ma Dïone onoravano e Cupido,
quella per madre sua, questo per figlio,
e dicean ch' el sedette in grembo a Dido,
e da costei ond' io principio piglio
pigliavano il vocabol de la stella
che 'l sol vagheggia or da coppa or da ciglio.
Io non m'accorsi del salire in ella,
ma d'esservi entro mi fé assai fede
la donna mia ch' i' vidi far più bella.
E come in fiamma favilla si vede,
e come in voce voce si discerne
quand' una è ferma e altra va e riede:
vid' io in essa luce altre lucerne
muoversi in giro più e men correnti,
al modo, credo, di lor viste interne.
Di fredda nube non disceser venti,
o visibili o no, tanto festini
che non paressero impediti e lenti
a chi avesse quei lumi divini
veduti a noi venir, lasciando il giro
pria cominciato in li alti Serafini;
e dentro a quei che più innanzi appariro
sonava "*Osanna*" sì, che unque poi
di rïudir non fui sanza disiro.

CANTO 8

Venus—Charles Martel—perfect operation of the heavens—need for diversity of human gifts—heredity overridden by the stars

The world used to believe, to its peril, that the
lovely Cyprian radiated mad desire, turning in
the third epicycle,
and therefore those ancient peoples in their
ancient error paid the honor of sacrifice and
votive cry not merely to her,
but they honored Dione and Cupid as well,
the first as her mother, the second as her son,
and they said that he sat on Dido's lap,
and from her from whom I take my beginning
they took the name of the star that woos the
sun, now at his nape, now at his brow.
I did not perceive our rising to it, but that we
were within it, my lady gave me proof, whom I
saw become more beautiful.
And as we see sparks within a flame, and as
we discern a voice within another voice, when
one is fixed and the other goes and returns:
I saw in that light other lamps moving
circularly, more and less swiftly, to the measure,
I believe, of their inner sight.
From a cold cloud winds never descended,
whether visible or not, so swiftly that they would
not appear impeded and slow
to whoever had seen those blessed lights
come toward us, leaving the circling begun
earlier among the high Seraphim;
and within those who appeared closest
"*Hosanna*" sounded, such that I have never
been without the yearning to hear it again.

Indi si fece l'un più presso a noi,
e solo incominciò: "Tutti sem presti
al tuo piacer, perché di noi ti gioi.
Noi ci volgiam coi Principi celesti—
d'un giro e d'un girare e d'una sete—
ai quali tu del mondo già dicesti:
'Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete,'
e sem sì pien d'amor che, per piacerti,
non fia men dolce un poco di quïete."
Poscia che li occhi miei si fuoro offerti
a la mia donna reverenti, ed essa
fatti li avea di sé contenti e certi,
rivolsersi a la luce che promessa
tanto s'avea, e: "Deh, chi siete?" fue
la voce mia di grande affetto impressa.
E quanto e quale vid' io lei far piùe
per allegrezza nova che s'accrebbe,
quando parlai, a l'allegrezze sue!
Così fatta, mi disse: "Il mondo m'ebbe
giù poco tempo, e se più fosse stato
molto sarà di mal che non sarebbe.
La mia letizia mi ti tien celato,
che mi raggia dintorno e mi nasconde
quasi animal di sua seta fasciato.
Assai m'amasti, e avesti ben onde,
ché s' io fossi giù stato, io ti mostrava
di mio amor più che le fronde.
Quella sinistra riva che si lava
di Rodano, poi ch' è misto con Sorga,
per suo segnore a tempo m'aspettava,
e quel corno d'Ausonia che s'imborga
di Bari e di Gaeta e di Catona,
da ove Tronto e Verde in mare sgorga.
Fulgeami già in fronte la corona
di quella terra che 'l Danubio riga,
poi che le ripe tedesche abbandona.
E la bella Trinacria, che caliga
tra Pachino e Peloro sopra 'l golfo
che riceve da Euro maggior briga,

Then one came closer to us and began,
alone: "We are all eager to please you so that
you may rejoice in us.
We revolve with the heavenly Principalities—
in the same circle, with the same circling and
the same thirst—to whom in the world you once said:
'*You who by intellection move the third heaven,*'
and we are so full of love that, to please
you, a little quiet will be no less sweet."
When my eyes had reverently offered
themselves to my lady, and she had made them
happy and sure of her,
they turned back to the light that had
promised so much, and: "Ah, who are you?"
was my speech, stamped with great affection.
How and how much did I see it increase with
new gladness that was added, when I spoke, to
its gladnesses!
Having become thus, it spoke: "The world
had me but a little while, and had it been longer
much evil to come would not exist.
My rejoicing keeps me hidden from you, it
radiates around me and hides me like an animal
wrapped in its silk.
You loved me well, and you surely had cause,
for if I had stayed down there I would have
shown you more than the foliage of my love.
The left bank that is washed by Rhone, once
it is mixed with Sorgue, awaited me as its lord in
time,
with that corner of Ausonia that is fortified by
Bari and Gaeta and Catona, and whence the
Tronto and the Verde pour into the sea.
Already on my brow was shining the crown
of the land the Danube waters after it leaves
behind its German banks.
And lovely Trinacria, that darkens between
Pachino and Pelorus, on the gulf that is most
beaten by Eurus,

non per Tifeo ma per nascente solfo,
attesi avrebbe li suoi regi ancora,
nati per me di Carlo e di Ridolfo,
se mala segnoria, che sempre accora
li popoli suggetti, non avesse
mosso Palermo a gridar: 'Mora, mora!'
E se mio frate questo antivedesse,
l'avara povertà di Catalogna
già fuggeria perché non li offendesse,
ché veramente proveder bisogna
per lui, o per altrui, sì ch'a sua barca
carcata più d'incarco non si pogna.
La sua natura, che di larga parca
discese, avria mestier di tal milizia
che non curasse di mettere in arca."
"Però ch' i' credo che l'alta letizia
che 'l tuo parlar m'infonde, segnor mio,
là 've ogne ben si termina e s'inizia,
per te si veggia come la vegg' io,
grata m'è più, e anco quest' ho caro
perché 'l discerni rimirando in Dio.
Fatto m'hai lieto, e così mi fa chiaro,
poi che, parlando, a dubitar m'hai mosso
com' esser può di dolce seme amaro."
Questo io a lui, ed elli a me: "S' io posso
mostrarti un vero, a quel che tu dimandi
terrai lo viso come tien lo dosso.
Lo Ben che tutto il regno che tu scandi
volge e contenta, fa esser virtute
sua provedenza in questi corpi grandi.
E non pur le nature provedute
sono in la Mente ch' è da sé perfetta,
ma esse insieme con la lor salute,
per che quantunque quest' arco saetta
disposto cade a preveduto fine,
sì come cosa in suo segno diretta.
Se ciò non fosse, il ciel che tu cammine
producerebbe sì li suoi effetti
che non sarebbero arti, ma ruine,

not because of Typheus but of sulfur in the making, would have been able to expect kings born through me going back to Charles and Rudolph,

if ill government, which always burdens the hearts of the subjected peoples, had not moved Palermo to shout: 'Die, die!'

And if my brother foresaw this, he would flee the greedy stinginess of Catalonia, to prevent its harming him,

for truly he or another must look ahead, so that no more cargo be placed on his already laden bark.

His nature, descended frugal from a liberal one, would need officials not concerned to store up coins in chests."

"Because I believe that the deep joy your speech instills in me, my lord, is seen by you, where every good ends and begins,

as clearly as I see it, I rejoice the more; and I rejoice that you discern it gazing into God.

You have made me happy, now illumine me, since, speaking, you have made me wonder how a bitter plant can spring from a sweet seed."

This I said to him, and he to me: "If I can show you a truth, you will have your face toward what you ask, rather than, as now, your back.

The Good that turns and sustains the kingdom you are scaling makes its providence a shaping power in these great bodies.

And not only the beings are foreseen in the Mind that is perfect in itself, but they and their wellbeing, too,

so that whatever this bow shoots forth, falls, being ordered to a goal foreseen, like an arrow direct-ed at its target.

If that were not the case, the effects of the heavens you are traversing would not be art, but ruins,

e ciò esser non può, se li 'ntelletti
che muovon queste stelle non son manchi
e manco il primo, che non li ha perfetti.
Vuo' tu che questo ver più ti s'imbianchi?"
E io: "Non già, ché impossibil veggio
che la Natura in quel ch' è uopo stanchi."
Ond' elli ancora: "Or dì: sarebbe il peggio
per l'omo in terra, se non fosse cive?"
"Sì," rispuos' io, "e qui ragion non cheggio."
"E puot' elli esser, se giù non si vive
diversamente per diversi offici?
Non, se 'l maestro vostro ben vi scrive."
Sì venne deducendo infino a quici;
poscia conchiuse: "Dunque esser diverse
convien di vostri effetti le radici:
per ch'un nasce Solone e altro Serse,
altro Melchisedèch e altro quello
che volando per l'aere il figlio perse.
La circular natura, ch' è suggello
a la cera mortal, fa ben sua arte,
ma non distingue l'un da l'altro ostello.
Quinci addivien ch' Esaù si diparte
per seme da Iacòb, e vien Quirino
da sì vil padre che si rende a Marte:
natura generata il suo cammino
simil farebbe sempre a' generanti,
se non vincesse il proveder divino.
Or quel che t'era dietro t'è davanti,
ma perché sappi che ti de mi giova,
un corollario voglio che t'ammanti.
Sempre natura, se fortuna trova
discorde a sé, com' ogne altra semente
fuor di sua regïon, fa mala prova.
E se 'l mondo là giù ponesse mente
al fondamento che Natura pone,
seguendo lui avria buona la gente.
Ma voi torcete a la religïone
tal che fia nato a cignersi la spada,
e fate re di tal ch' è da sermone,
onde la traccia vostra è fuor di strada."

and that cannot be, if the Intelligences that
move these stars are not defective, nor the First
defective in not having made them perfect.
Do you wish this truth to be made brighter for
you?" And I: "Not at all; for I see it is impossible
for Nature to grow tired in what is needful."
Then he again: "Now tell me: would it be worse
for man on earth, if he were not a citizen?"
"Yes," I replied, "and here I ask no proof."
"And can he be one, if down there people do
not live differently through different callings?
No, if your master has written well for you."
Thus he came by deduction to this point, and
then concluded: "Therefore your different
effects must have different roots:
hence one is born Solon, another Xerxes,
another Melchisedech, and another the one
who, flying through the air, lost his son.
Circling Nature, a seal of your mortal wax,
does its art well, but it does not distinguish one
from another dwelling.
Hence it happens that Esau's seed departs
from Jacob, and Quirinus comes from so base a
father that he is attributed to Mars:
a generated nature would always take a path
like that of its generators, if divine Providence
did not intervene:
Now what was behind you is before you, but
so that you may know that I delight in you, I wish
a corollary to cloak you.
A nature that finds a fortune discordant with
itself, like any other seed outside its proper
region, always makes ill proof of itself.
And if the world down there would put its
mind to the foundation that Nature lays, by
building on it you would have good people.
But you force into religious life a man born to
gird on the sword, and you make a king of one
who prefers words:
therefore your course strays from the path."

NOTES

1–12. The world used . . . at his brow: Dante opens his account of the third planet with an introduction that distinguishes his own scientific astrological views, which will come increasingly to expression, from ancient pagan superstitions, three aspects of which are condemned: (1) the notion that the third planet was the goddess Aphrodite/Venus herself ("the lovely Cyprian"; lines 1–3 and 10–12); (2) the notion that the power of Aphrodite/Venus was irresistible (lines 1–3); and (3) the general system of pagan polytheism (lines 4–9). Cf. the closely related passage in 4.61–63.

1–3. the lovely Cyprian . . . the third epicycle: Aphrodite/Venus, according to one pagan myth, was born (of Zeus and Dione) near Cyprus, her home and the center of her cult.

1. to its peril: That is, the false beliefs of paganism are displeasing to God (Ex. 20.2–5, 34.12–17) and lead to evil practices (cf. Rom.1.18–32).

2–3. radiated mad desire: "Mad desire" (the *fols amors* of the troubadors; see *Purg.* 26.143: "Consiros vei la pasada *folor*" [with chagrin I view my past *madness*]) signifies uncontrollable sensual desire (cf. *Inf.* 5.38–39: "I peccator carnali, / che la ragion sommettono al talento" [the carnal sinners, who subject their reason to their lust]). Dante's point is that Venus, "lo bel pianeto che d'amar conforta" [the lovely planet that strengthens us to love] (*Purg.* 1.19), strengthens all forms of love, not merely the sensual (but see 9.32–36 and 95–105, with notes); in the present canto the main focus will be the love that should unite society.

2. radiated: *Conv.* 2.6.9 (see the note to lines 34–49) explains that the influence of all the planets is conveyed downward in the rays of their light (cf. Litt 1963, Kay 1994). The term also suggests the idea that the influence of the planets is irresistible (for Dante's refutation of that view, current also in his day, see *Purg.* 16.73–78).

3. the third epicycle: This is the only appearance of this Ptolemaic term in the entire *Comedy* (that of Venus is briefly discussed in *Conv.* 2.3.16, where Dante seems to think of it as a physical sphere). The question of the physical basis of the Ptolemaic mathematics of planetary movements was subject to voluminous debate (see Grant 1994, Lerner 2008).

4–12. those ancient . . . woos the sun: The ancients gave this planet the name of the Cyprian, i.e. "Venus." "Ancient error" (line 6) refers to the entire system of ancient polytheism, especially that of the Hellenistic period, according to which the planets themselves were irresistible gods (rather than physical bodies governed by angelic "intelligences," the view Dante shared with most of his educated contemporaries, whether Christians, Muslims, or Jews).

5. sacrifice and votive cry: Sacrifice and ritual invocation were regular parts of the liturgy in honor of the Olympians.

9. that he sat on Dido's lap: At the banquet in honor of Aeneas (*Aen.* 1.655–756), the irresistible Venus ensures that Dido will fall hopelessly in love with Aeneas by requiring Cupid to assume the form of Aeneas's young son Ascanius and sit on her lap, instilling "hidden fire" (*Aen.* 1.688; the incident is mentioned also in *Conv.* 2.5.14 as exemplifying the pagan myth of Cupid as the son of Venus):

> reginam petit. haec oculis, haec pectore toto
> haeret et interdum gremio fovet inscia Dido
> insidat quantus miserae deus.
> [he seeks out the queen; she with her eyes, with her entire breast
> clings to him, Dido often clasps him to her bosom, unknowing,
> wretched one, how great a god is laying siege to her] (*Aen.* 1.717–19).

Along with his suggestions about the fourth *Eclogue* (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 14), this identification of Vergil's mythology with pagan superstition is by implication one of Dante's severest criticisms of him.

On Dido, cf. *Inf.* 5.61–62 and 85, and *Par.* 9.97–98. Dante entirely ignores the fact that it was common knowledge that the story of Aeneas's affair with Dido was invented by Vergil and that the ancient historians, followed by Augustine (whom Dante had surely read) and other patristic writers, denied that the two were contemporaries and regarded the real Dido as heroically chaste.

10–12. from her from whom . . . now at his brow:[1] That is, the ancient pagans named the third planet after the goddess of their belief ("the lovely Cyprian"), supposing her to be the planet itself. In indicating that the cults of Venus, Dione, and Cupid predated the naming of the planet, Dante seems to have understood that the conflation of the traditional myths with astrological religion was a Hellenistic—i.e. late—development (it was beginning in Plato's time; see *Timaeus* 38a–d, Vlastos 1975).

The plain sense here is that the poet "take[s his] beginning" (line 10) not from the planet but *from the goddess*, from her in whom the pagans believed "to their peril." The idea that "her from whom," etc. refers to the planet (Dunbar 1929, Pézard) is a drastic misconstruction of the passage, which states: "The pagans took the name of the planet from the Cyprian, the [false] goddess I mentioned when I began this canto." The notion that Dante could attribute his existential "beginning" to the goddess is of course senseless (cf. Muscetta in *LDS*). There is an emphasis on rhetorical procedure here that demands a certain sharpness of attention from the reader (note the verb *pigliare* [to take] in lines 10 and 11, in both cases referring to the use of words); it is appropriate to both themes, astrology and rhetoric, and it may well be related to *Convivio* 2 (cf. notes on lines 34–49 and 147, and Additional Note 13). (For the question of the "lord"—the dominant influence—of Dante's horoscope, see notes to 22.112–23, Chapter 2 of Durling/Martinez 1990, Additional Note 12.) Dante usually refers to the planets by periphrasis, avoiding the ordinary pagan names except to condemn them (as here and in 4.61–63; cf. 5.93–99; 10.28–39; 14.82; 18.28–33, 61–72; 21.4–15; and 29.1; "Jove" in 18.95 is an exception).

11–12. the star that . . . now at his brow: In modern terminology, the smallness of the orbits of Mercury and Venus (smaller than the earth's orbit and thus within it) means that, seen from earth, they are always close to the sun and often hidden by its rays. Seen from earth, Mercury's maximum angular distance from the sun is 30° 26′, which means it is rarely visible. Venus's is 47°; when it is to the west of the sun, Venus rises before the sun as the morning star, wooing the sun from in front ("at his brow"); when to the east, Venus sets after the sun as the evening star, wooing the sun from behind ("at his nape"). (Some take "il sol" [the sun] to be the grammatical subject of "vagheggia" [woos, loves, dreams of]; this is unlikely, since it is Venus that does the conspicuous circling; cf. 22.142–44.)

13–15. I did not perceive . . . more beautiful: That Beatrice's increased beauty is the sign of a further ascent will happen repeatedly, as in 5.94–99.

16–30. And as we see . . . to hear it again: Like Justinian's features, the features of the souls encountered from now on will be hidden by the brightness of their gladness, which depends on the intensity of their vision (line 21). "That light" (line 19) may seem to be without antecedent, and its reference is in fact ambiguous. The nearest referent would be Beatrice's increased beauty (lines 13–15), naturally expressed as light (as in 5.94–96; cf. lines 137–38, with note);

the other possibility is the light of the planet itself ("the star," line 11; again, cf. 5.94–99).

19–21. I saw in that . . . their inner sight: We take Dante's "in giro" [circling] to indicate that each soul moves in its own particular circle, since their movements differ in velocity. Beginning with the cantos of the sun, the souls will be fully coordinated in symbolic patterns (see Ferrante 1984); the souls in Venus anticipate the full coordination of the theologians in the sun but do not achieve it (cf. the notes to lines 31–148 and 76–84).

22–32. From a cold cloud . . . and began, alone: As in the moon and Mercury, the souls gather to meet the pilgrim and Beatrice, leaving their previous dancing, without any particular order, and one soul becomes the chief interlocutor. Note the correlation of this passage with the similes of lines 16–19 (sight—fire and sparks; and hearing—polyphony); here: sight—cold winds coming from a cloud (cf. *Purg.* 5.37–42, a departure compared with hot winds); and hearing—the singing of "Hosanna."

26–27. leaving the circling . . . high Seraphim: One notes the complexity of what is asserted about the dance of these souls: (1) in the Empyrean, they seem to be integrated into the universal dance of Heaven, though they are particularly associated with the order of Principalities (lines 34–36); the Seraphim, the highest order, seem here to stand for all the angels; in other words, although associated with the third lowest order, these souls share essentially the same beatitude with all the blessed; (2) descending to meet the pilgrim, they continue to circle (lines 19–21); (3) they gather to meet the pilgrim and Beatrice.

29. Hosanna: For this joyous acclamation of the advent of a king, see the note to *Purg.* 29.51.

31–148. Then one came . . . from the path: The rest of the canto is devoted to the encounter with Carlo Martello, the eldest son of Charles II of Anjou (see the notes to 6.103–11, *Purg.* 20.79–84). When his father was captured during the war of the Sicilian Vespers in 1284, while Charles I of Anjou was still alive, Carlo Martello was declared heir to the throne with full privileges; when Charles I died (January 1285), Carlo Martello governed the Kingdom of Naples (now southern Italy, Sicily having been lost) with an advisory Council, Charles II being still a prisoner; he was greatly favored by successive popes, who arranged his marriage (1287) with Clemenza,

daughter of Rudolph of Hapsburg. In 1289 his father was provisionally released by the Aragonese, on condition that his three younger sons (Roberto, Ludovico, and Federico) replace him in Aragon as hostages; Carlo Martello governed again for a longer period (1289–94) while his father was involved in prolonged negotiations in France for his permanent release. During this period Carlo Martello took an increasingly active part in governing and reorganizing the kingdom, visiting each part of it. In 1290 the throne of Hungary became vacant, and after his mother, Marie of Hungary, renounced her claim (1292), Carlo Martello was formally recognized as king.

In 1294 Charles II was finally able to resume the throne in Naples, and he made a festive return via northern Italy, including a visit to Florence, where Carlo Martello came to meet him. The festivities in Florence lasted three weeks; this is the only occasion on which Carlo Martello and Dante could have met, and, in order to explain their nascent friendship (lines 55–57), it has been suggested that Dante was a member of the welcoming commission, and that "Voi ch'intendendo" (see line 34, with note) was performed before Carlo Martello. Just at the peak of his fortunes, universally beloved and regarded as sure to be a wise and capable monarch (he is the only Capetian or Angevin whom Dante praises), Carlo Martello, along with his wife, died of an unidentified illness in August 1295. (The rumor that circulated at the time, that the two had been poisoned at the instigation of Carlo's younger brother Robert—see lines 74–84—, is regarded as without foundation by modern historians, as it was by Dante.)

Carlo Martello is presented by Dante as one whose life was especially influenced by the planet Venus, both in his affectionate nature and his special gifts for achieving social harmony, but also in relation to his early death; as Peters 1991 observes, drawing on *Convivio* 4 and Nardi 1967a, Venus was thought to govern the stage of human life called *adolescentia*—from birth, or sometimes from age 9, to age 25—normally followed by *iuventus* [youth], governed by the sun. His development arrested by death, Carlo Martello never reaches full maturity. He, too, is a kind of incipient sun (cf. the notes to lines 19–21, 55–57, and 76–84), a chief instance of eclipse by the shadow of mortality.

34–39. We revolve . . . no less sweet: The canzone whose first line is quoted here, "Voi ch'intendendo il terzo ciel movete," is the first of the three canzoni (out of the fourteen originally planned) discussed in the *Convivio*. In Book 2, on this canzone (according to the prose commentary, it is addressed to the

angelic order of "Thrones," which when he wrote it he took to govern the third heaven; see 28.130–37, with notes), Dante discusses the general theme of the influence of the planets and their movers and develops an extended analogy between the nine heavens and the nine sciences (the heaven of Venus, the main focus there, is correlated with the science of rhetoric, 2.13–14). The relation of this passage in the *Convivio* with the *Paradiso* has not been sufficiently investigated (again, see Additional Note 13).

34–37. We revolve with . . . the third heaven: Dante's self-correction here (see previous note, and cf. 28.130–35, with note) is phrased in such a way as to suggest that the address was acceptable to the actual "movers," the Principalities, in spite of the poet's mistake, which is not mentioned.

49–51. The world . . . would not exist: See the note to lines 31–148. That much evil resulted from Carlo Martello's early death at twenty-five will be touched on later (notably in lines 76–84 and in 9.1–6); for the Virgilian subtext—Marcellus—see *Purg.* 30.20, with note. The providential provision of well-being to all creation (especially to man) is a basic theme of the canto and presents Dante with a major intellectual challenge.

52–54. My rejoicing . . . wrapped in its silk: The striking comparison of the radiance of the soul's gladness with the cocoon of the silkworm (cf. the note to lines 16–21) contains an allusion to its metamorphosis (see *Purg.* 10.121–29, with note).

55–57. You loved me well . . . foliage of my love: This passage is the only evidence of the nascent friendship between Dante and Carlo Martello, who was five or six years younger than the poet. "You surely had cause" (line 55) must mean that Dante was already able, from their initial encounters, to foresee that Carlo Martello would express his growing affection for him by liberal support (material or moral or both). The analogy of a tree's first putting forth leaves and then bearing fruit alludes to the cycle of the seasons and the dependence of all earthly fruitfulness on the heavenly bodies, especially the sun: the fruit foreseen could not ripen to its natural season of harvest (see the note to lines 76–84).

58–75. The left bank . . . shout: Die, die: Carlo Martello now identifies himself by enumerating the realms to which he was rightful heir: Provence (lines 58–60), the Kingdom of Naples (lines 61–63), Hungary (lines 64–66), and Sicily (lines 67–75).

58–60. The left bank . . . its lord in time: The county of Provence, the dowry of Carlo Martello's grandmother Béatriz, youngest daughter of count Raymond Berenguer V (see 6.127–42, with notes). The Rhone was the boundary dividing Provence on the west from Languedoc; the northern boundary was the river Sorgue, which flows into the Rhone just above Avignon. Provence, as well as the Kingdom of Naples, would have been his had he lived longer.

61–63. and that corner . . . pour into the sea: The part of southern Italy (Ausonia) bounded on the north by the rivers Tronto (flowing into the Adriatic) and Verde (flowing into the Tyrrhenian Sea; see the notes to *Purg.* 3.124–32; for both, see the map on p. 187): in other words, the Kingdom of Naples. The cities mentioned represent the vertices of a triangle roughly delineating the kingdom: Bari toward the heel of the boot, on the Adriatic; Gaeta above Naples on the Tyrrhenian; and Catona (an important port) near Reggio Calabria on the Strait of Messina.

64–66. Already on my brow . . . German banks: Carlo Martello had become king of Hungary, whose western boundary was close to Vienna, in 1292. From its source in the Bavarian Alps, the Danube flows through German-speaking lands until after Vienna. Hungary was the only portion of his extensive inheritance of which Carlo Martello actually took possession. (Note the allusion to sunlike splendor in the mention of the crown.)

67–75. And lovely Trinacria . . . to shout: Die, die: Along with his offspring, grandchildren of Charles II of Anjou and Rudolph of Hapsburg, Carlo Martello could rightfully have expected to inherit Sicily (Trinacria [Three-pointed land] was the Greek name of the island—cf. the triangular description of the kingdom in lines 61–63), but for the tyranny of his grandfather Charles I (see the notes to lines 73–75, 31–148, and 9.1–6)—another instance of the frustration of natural expectation.

67–70. Trinacria, that . . . sulfur in the making: Pachino and Pelorus are the two promontories at the southern and northern ends, respectively, of the eastern coast of Sicily (thus two of the three points of the triangle, the third being at Marsala on the west), which runs almost due north and south and hence is particularly buffeted by the east wind, Eurus; between them the sky is darkened by smoke from Mount Etna, not due, as Greco-Roman mythology had it, to the punishment of the Titan Typhoeus for his rebellion against the gods (cf. the famous passage describing Etna in eruption, *Aen.*

3.570–84), but by natural causes, supposed in the Middle Ages to be sulfur-producing fires.

73–75. if ill government . . . to shout: Die, die: Sicily was ruled by Charles I of Anjou after his victories over Manfred and Conradino (see *Purg.* 3.113–32 and 20.67–69, with notes), with oppressive harshness and avarice. The popular revolt against his "ill government" (line 73) began with the so-called "Sicilian Vespers" in Palermo on Easter Monday, 1282. "Mora, mora!" [let him die, die], the slogan reportedly shouted by the mob, is a third-person subjunctive with the implied subject "any Frenchman." The Sicilians invited Pedro III of Aragon (the kings of which ruled also over Catalonia) to take the throne of Sicily, and the Angevins never regained control there.

76–84. And if my brother . . . coins in chests: Carlo Martello refers to his younger brother, Robert of Anjou, who succeeded Charles II in 1304 as ruler of Provence and the Kingdom of Naples. The shadow of the earth prevents both potential suns, Carlo Martello and Robert, from realizing the ideal generosity of a ruler: Carlo possesses the requisite qualities and motives but is eclipsed by death, and Robert falls short because of stinginess and avarice (Dante clearly has both full and partial eclipses of the sun in mind; for the association of avarice with the element earth, see *Inf.* 7.22–33, and *Purg.* 19.115–26, with notes, and cf. 7.91–93 and 112–17). This passage on the liberality with which kings should reign, the quality that, along with justice, most justifies the analogy with the sun, occupies the exact midpoint of the canto (as the sun is central among the planets) and leads directly to the question dominating the rest of the canto.

79–84. for truly he . . . coins in chest: The "bark" is the body of his ship of state, i.e., his subjects, who are already burdened with heavy "cargo"—i.e., taxation. Or the "bark" is possibly Robert himself, who has already accumulated enough reproaches against him. If he cannot understand this danger himself, because of his frugality, innate or acquired, he needs wiser counselors, ones not primarily concerned with storing up treasure. The term *milizia*, which we render as "officials," means properly "knighthood" or "army" (cf. 15.140); it connotes qualities diametrically opposed to avarice and thus here has considerable ironic force.

82–83. His nature . . . from a liberal one: Since both Charles I and Charles II of Anjou are identified by Dante as extremely avaricious (see *Purg.* 20.61–69 and 79–84), it is difficult to follow Dante here. Whose is the

"liberal" nature from whom Robert's "frugal" one has descended? Carlo Martello would seem a likelier candidate for being the genetic sport. In fact, it is probable that Dante has here engaged in one of his frequent tricks at the expense of the careless reader (see Durling 2001a and Durling 2003; lines 1–12 of this canto provide another instance): we are to understand that Robert of Anjou is *not* an instance of the heavens' overriding heredity, but that Carlo Martello is just that.

85–93. Because I believe . . . a sweet seed: The pilgrim's joyous reaction to Carlo Martello's account of himself and his brother (actually tragic in its implications) serves to reestablish the tone of lines 31–54; he then raises the question of exceptions to heredity, which occupies the rest of the canto (and which might more pertinently be phrased, "How can a sweet plant spring from a sour seed?").

94–148. and he to me . . . strays from the path: The remainder of the canto falls into two parts, Carlo Martello's main argument (lines 94–137) and his addition of a "corollary" (lines 138–48), a supplementary conclusion implied by the main argument.

94–136. If I can show . . . is before you: This passage is one of Dante's most interesting and important discussions of astrology; it asserts that the influence of the heavens (i.e., the planets and fixed stars) on the development of the human fetus is stronger than heredity, and that in fact it was ordained by Providence precisely in order to override heredity and thus serve the needs of human society. It is thus one of the most fundamental and powerful instruments of God's government of the world, which, as the Bible repeatedly teaches (as in Ps. 8.6–8; cf. *De civ. Dei* 12.20–24 and 22.1), was created in order to serve man, its crown.

94–96. If I can show . . . as now, your back: In his brief introduction (recalled in line 136), Carlo Martello uses a traditional figure for lack of understanding (or for repression; see *Confessions* 8.7.16): having one's back toward the truth, rather than one's eyes (cf. *Purg.* 22.67–69, and *Par.* 28.4–10, with note).

97–136. The Good that turns . . . is before you: Carlo Martello's explanation has several stages: (1a) The heavenly bodies are the direct instruments of God's government of the world, which provides for the well-being of creatures as well as for their existence; (1b) the operations of the heavenly bodies must therefore be unerring (lines 97–111); (2a) man is naturally a social being (lines 115–17); (2b) the functioning of society depends on the division of duties and

thus on a diversity of innate abilities (lines 118–26); (3a) the influence of the heavenly bodies is required to ensure this diversity, since heredity would always produce sons identical with their fathers, but (3b) the heavenly bodies do not take into account the social classes into which the gifted will be born (lines 127–35). That sexual reproduction, in all species, always produces genetically unique offspring is a modern realization. (On Dante's mainly Aristotelian views of reproduction, see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 11.)

97–111. The Good that turns . . . made them perfect: The first phase of the argument, accepted as self-evident by the pilgrim. Note the procedure, fundamental to the *Paradiso*, of reasoning deductively, downward from general propositions, often regarding higher causes, as in 2.106–48. The optimistic view taken here will be modified later (see 13.52–78, and see the notes to lines 127–35, 139–41 below).

97–99. The Good that turns . . . in these great bodies: The "Good" is God, of course; the term *virtute* [from Latin *virtus*, in modern Italian *virtù*; we translate it here as "shaping power"] in reference to God usually refers to his exercise of *creative* power, usually identified with the second Person of the Trinity (for Dante's use of the term, see Chapter 4 of Durling/Martinez 1990).

103–5. whatever this bow . . . directed at its target: In this metaphor, the "bow" is the power of the heavens, wielded by God, the imagined archer; the "arrow" is some particular influence of the heavens on the sublunar; the "target" is an intention in the mind of God, his aim.

106–11. If that were not . . . made them perfect: The effects of Nature (in the sense of *natura naturans*, the term normally refers to the heavenly bodies, as here and below) cannot be imperfect (let alone "ruin"), since they are produced by God acting through things he directly created (see 7.134–38, with notes). The "Intelligences" are the angelic movers of the spheres; the "First" is God: they cannot be defective.

112–14. Do you wish . . . what is needful: Conclusion of the first phase of Carlo Martello's argument, with the pilgrim accepting the reasoning as self-evident.

115–26. Then he again . . . lost his son: The second phase of the argument, signaled by "or" [now], departing from a further set of axioms: man is a social being (Aristotle, *Politics* 1.2: "Man is by nature a political animal"), and society requires division of duties and therefore diversity of innate abilities.

118–20. And can he be one . . . written well for you: Aristotle ("the master of those who know," *Inf.* 4.131), in *Politics* 1.3–13, had categorized the members of society by sex and by their status as free or slave. Free men were superior to both women (by nature bearers of children) and slaves (by nature instruments of their masters); the functions of free citizens were to govern and to make war; physical work was the function of slaves and artisans. Aristotle implicitly recognized the need for different productive activities but had nothing like the modern notion of the division of labor, so clearly anticipated by Dante. For Dante's remarkably original account in *DVE* 1.7 of the confusion of tongues—Gen. 11.1–9—as following the division of labor among the builders of the tower of Babel, see Mengaldo's notes in *Opere minori*, vol. 2 (and cf. Durling 1992).

121–26. Thus he came . . . lost his son: The "different effects" are the skilled applications of abilities that have innate "roots." Solon, Xerxes, Melchisedek [the name means literally, "just king"], and Daedalus (who, flying, "lost his son," Icarus) stand, respectively, for those gifted as law givers, military commanders, righteous kings, and artists/inventors. Dante knew of Solon and Xerxes from Orosius, Melchisedek from the Bible (Gen. 14.18–20), and Daedalus from Vergil (*Aen.* 6.14–33) and Ovid (*Met.* 8.183–235).

127–35. Circling Nature . . . did not intervene: The third stage in the argument: the overriding function of astrological influences in providing for the needed diversity of innate abilities. The argument is paradoxical, for by this account it seems that the intervention of Providence does produce ruins—historical disasters like the Capetians, Angevins, and other base or incompetent rulers, as indicated in lines 139–48.

127–28. Circling Nature . . . mortal wax: The heavenly bodies stamp all mortal bodies as seal stamps its form on molten wax (again, see 7.134–38 and Additional Note 12).

128–32. it does not distinguish . . . attributed to Mars: God's Providence, acting through the Intelligences and the heavenly bodies, acts without aiming at particular individuals or social classes; this seems derived from the traditional astrological idea that the light of the stars and planets operates along lines of sight.

130–32. Hence it happens . . . attributed to Mars: According to Gen. 25.21–26, the twins Esau and Jacob struggled against each other in the womb; Esau was born first, covered with red hair, and Jacob came holding Esau's

heel; later (Gen. 25.29–34) Esau sold his rights as firstborn to Jacob for a dish of lentils; the tradition regarded Jacob as just, and Esau as violently unjust. According to Livy (1.4), Quirinus (Romulus) was born to Rhea Silvia, a Vestal (vowed to eternal virginity) who claimed—falsely, in Livy's and Dante's views—that the father was the god Mars (cf. the notes to lines 133–35 and 6.40–42).

133–35. a generated nature . . . did not intervene:[2] In asserting that the heavens override heredity, Dante accepts a major premise of traditional astrology; he clearly accepts the notion of meaningful individual horoscopes (see Additional Note 12); for his view of his own horoscope, (see 22.112–23, with note; Durling and Martinez 1990; and Additional Note 14). Since the form of the term *generante* [generator] does not vary with gender, "generanti" (line 134) conceivably refers to both parents (see *Purg.* 25.37–51, *Par.* 3.120).

136. Now what was behind you is before you: Note the echo of lines 94–96.

137–38: that you may know . . . corollary to cloak you: The term *corollary* [*corollarium*, from *corolla*, diminutive of *corona*, "crown"] originally denoted a supplementary prize given to the winner of an athletic contest (see the note to *Purg.* 28.136, the only other appearance of this word in the *Comedy*). As Maierù (s.v. "Corollario" in *ED*) observes, the metaphor of the "mantle" [*manto*] refers to the light radiated by the blessed (cf. lines 52–54; for the clothing metaphor, see 14.37–58 and 25.88–96, with notes). Carlo Martello means that this evidence of his love will cause the pilgrim gladness, and thus increase the light that he (the pilgrim) emits.

139–41. A nature that finds . . . proof of itself: The term *fortune* is used here to mean "circumstances" or "lot." That the stars do not "distinguish one from another dwelling" brings it about that children may have innate gifts inconsistent with their social class, and if, because of this, their gifts are not fostered, their potentialities will not be fulfilled; like plants, human beings require the appropriate soil and cultivation.

142–48. if the world down there . . . strays from the path: Dante seems to envisage a society that would pay close attention to the natural gifts of children and recognize and foster rather than thwart them. Although he may not have thought out its full implications, this doctrine (a version of "la carrière ouverte aux talents," long before Napoleon) would justify an extreme degree of social mobility.

145–48. But you force . . . from the path: Dante offers no explanation for such errors; presumably they would be due to rigid class distinctions and the power of heads of families (cf. 3.103–8). The tradition has long seen a reference here to King Robert of Naples, famous for writing sermons (though *sermo* can mean "speech" more broadly), since lines 79–84 have occasioned the entire discussion. Some see in lines 145–46 a reference to Robert's younger brother Ludovico, a Franciscan and bishop of Toulouse, canonized by John XXII in 1317, but he had no knightly inclinations.

Figure 6. Italy, ca. 1300

CANTO 9

Da poi che Carlo tuo, bella Clemenza,
m'ebbe chiarito, mi narrò li 'nganni
che ricever dovea la sua semenza,
ma disse: "Taci, e lascia muover li anni,"
sì ch' io non posso dir se non che pianto
giusto verrà di retro ai vostri danni.
E già la vita di quel lume santo
rivolta s'era al Sol cche la rïempie
come quel ben ch' a ogne cosa è tanto.
Ahi anime ingannate e fatture empie
che da sì fatto ben torcete i cuori,
drizzando in vanità le vostre tempie!
Ed ecco un altro di quelli splendori
ver' me si fece, e 'l suo voler piacermi
significava nel chiarir di fori.
Li occhi di Bëatrice, ch'eran fermi
sovra me come pria, di caro assenso
al mio disio certificato fermi.
"Deh, metti al mio voler tosto compenso,
beato spirto," dissi, "e fammi prova
ch' i' possa in te refletter quel ch' io penso!"
Onde la luce che m'era ancor nova
del suo profondo, ond' ella pria cantava,
seguette come a cui di ben far giova:
"In quella parte de la terra prava
italica che siede tra Rïalto
e le fontane di Brenta e di Piava,
si leva un colle, e non surge molt' alto,
là onde scese già una facella
che fece a la contrada un grande assalto.

CANTO 9

Venus: Charles Martel, continued—Cunizza d'Este—prophecy about Romagna—Folquet of Marseilles—Rahab—denunciation of the florin

After your Charles, beautiful Clémence, had
enlightened me, he narrated the betrayals that
his seed was to undergo,
but he said: "Be silent and let the years pass,"
so that I can say only that deserved weeping will
follow the wrongs you suffer.
And already the life of that holy light had
turned back to the Sun that fills it, as to the
Good that is sufficient to everything.
Ah, deluded souls, wicked creatures who
twist your hearts away from such a good,
directing your faces toward emptiness!
And behold, another of those splendors came
toward me and signified with its brightness its
desire to please me.
Beatrice's eyes, fixed upon me as before,
made me certain of sweet assent to my desire.
"Ah, give my desire quick recompense,
blessed spirit," I said, "and prove that what I
think I can reflect in you!"
Therefore the light that was still unknown to
me, from its own depths, where it earlier had been
singing, answered like one rejoicing to do good:
"In the part of the degenerate Italian land that
lies between Rialto and the springs of Brenta
and of Piave,
a hill rises up, and it does not become very
high, from which there once came down a
blazing torch that made a great assault upon
the countryside.

D'una radice nacqui e io ed ella:
Cunizza fui chiamata, e qui refulgo
perché mi vinse il lume d'esta stella,
ma lietamente a me medesma indulgo
la cagion di mia sorte, e non mi noia,
che parria forse forte al vostro vulgo.
Di questa luculenta e cara gioia
del nostro cielo che più m'è propinqua
grande fama rimase, e pria che moia,
questo centesimo anno ancor s'incinqua:
vedi se far si dee l'omo eccellente,
sì ch'altra vita la prima relinqua.
E ciò non pensa la turba presente
che Tagliamento e Adice richiude,
né per esser battuta ancor si pente,
ma tosto fia che Padova al palude
cangerà l'acqua che Vincenza bagna,
per essere al dover le genti crude,
e dove Sile e Cagnan s'accompagna
tal signoreggia e va con la testa alta,
che già per lui carpir si fa la ragna.
Piangerà Feltro ancora la difalta
de l'empio suo pastor, che sarà sconcia
sì, che per simil non s'entrò in malta.
Troppo sarebbe larga la bigoncia
che ricevesse il sangue ferrarese,
e stanco chi 'l pesasse a oncia a oncia,
che donerà questo prete cortese
per mostrarsi di parte; e cotai doni
conformi fieno al viver del paese.
Sù sono specchi, voi dicete Troni,
onde refulge a noi Dio giudicante,
sì che questi parlar ne paion buoni."
Qui si tacette, e fecemi sembiante
che fosse ad altro volta, per la rota
in che si mise com' era davante.
L'altra letizia, che m'era già nota
per cara cosa, mi si fece in vista
qual fin balasso in che lo sol percuota.

From one root both it and I were born:
Cunizza I was called, and here my brightness
shines because the light of this star overcame me,
but joyfully I forgive myself the cause of my
fate, and it does not harm me, though perhaps
that would seem difficult to your common folk.
Of this luminous dear jewel of our heaven
that is closest to me, great fame remained on
earth, and before it will die,
the century that turns this year will enfive
itself: see how one should strive to be excellent,
so that a second life is left behind by the first.
To this no thought is given by the present
herd enclosed by Tagliamento and Adige, nor,
though beaten, do they yet repent,
but soon will it come to pass that Padova will
stain in the swamp the water that bathes Vicenza,
because its people are so unripe to their duty,
and where Sile and Cagnano come together,
there is one who lords it and goes with head held
high, and already they make the web to snare him.
Feltro will yet weep for the fault of its wicked
shepherd, a filthier than any yet judged worthy
of a dungeon.
The vat would be large indeed that could
receive, and weary would he be who would
weigh, ounce by ounce, the Ferrarese blood
that this generous priest will give over to
prove he is a Guelph, and such gifts will
conform to the ways of that land.
Above there are mirrors, you call them
Thrones, and from them God's judging shines to
us, and so such talk seems good to us."
Here she fell silent, and it seemed to me she
turned to something else, taking her place in the
wheel where she had been before.
The other joy, already known to me as
precious, became in my sight like a pure ruby in
the sun.

Per letiziar là sù fulgor s'acquista,
sì come riso qui, ma giù s'abbuia
l'ombra di fuor, come la mente trista.
"Dio vede tutto, e tuo veder s'inluia,"
diss' io, "beato spirto, sì che nulla
voglia di sé a te puot' esser fuia.
Dunque la voce tua, che 'l Ciel trastulla
sempre col canto di quei fochi pii
che di sei ali facen la coculla,
perché non satisface a' miei disii?
Già non attendere' io tua dimanda,
s'io m'intuassi, come tu t'inmii."
"La maggior valle in che l'acqua si spanda,"
incominciaro allor le sue parole,
"fuor di quel mar che la terra inghirlanda,
tra 'discordanti liti contra 'l sole
tanto sen va che fa meridïano
là dove l'orizzonte pria far suole.
Di quella valle fu' io litorano
tra Ebro e Macra, che per cammin corto
parte lo Genovese dal Toscano.
Ad un occaso quasi e ad un orto
Buggea siede e la terra ond' io fui,
che fé del sangue suo già caldo il porto.
Folco mi disse quella gente a cui
fu noto il nome mio, e questo cielo
di me s'imprenta com' io fe' di lui,
ché più non arse la figlia di Belo,
noiando e a Sicheo e a Creusa,
di me, infin che si convenne al pelo,
né quella Rodopëa che delusa
fu da Demofoonte, né Alcide
quando Iole nel core ebbe rinchiusa.
Non però qui si pente, ma si ride,
non de la colpa, ch'a mente non torna,
ma del Valor ch'ordinò e provide.
Qui si rimira ne l'arte ch'addorna
cotanto affetto, e discernesi 'l bene
per che 'l mondo di sù quel di giù torna.

By rejoicing up there they gain in brightness,
as here we smile, but down below, shades
become as dark to sight as the mind is wicked.
"God sees all things, and your sight so inhims
itself," I said, "O blessed spirit, that no desire
can flee from you.
Therefore your voice, that delights Heaven
always, with the singing of those devout fires
that make of their six wings their robes,
why does it not fulfill my desires? Surely I
would not wait for your asking, if I could inyou
myself as you inme yourself."
"The largest valley in which water can
spread," began its words then, "after the ocean
that garlands the dry land,
between discordant shores goes against the
sun so far that it has its meridian where formerly
its horizon was.
I was a dweller on the shore of that valley
between Ebro and Magra, whose short course
parts the Genovese from the Tuscan.
Bougie has almost the same sunset and
sunrise with the city I was from, that once made
the port warm with its blood.
Folquet those people called me who knew my
name, and this heaven is stamped by me, as I
was by it,
for the daughter of Belus, wronging both
Sichaeus and Creusa, did not burn more than I,
as long as it befitted my hairs,
nor that Rhodopea who was deceived by Demophoön, nor Alcides when he held Iole in his heart.
Not for that do we repent here, but we laugh,
not for the guilt, which comes no longer to mind,
but for the Worth that ordained and foresaw.
Here we marvel at the art that so much love
adorns, and we discern the Good on account of
which the world above is the lathe for the world
below.

Ma perché tutte le tue voglie piene
ten porti che son nate in questa spera,
procedere ancor oltre mi convene.
Tu vuo' saper chi è in questa lumera
che qui appresso me così scintilla
come raggio di sole in acqua mera.
Or sappi che là entro si tranquilla
Raàb, e a nostr' ordine congiunta
di lei nel sommo grado si sigilla.
Da questo cielo, in cui l'ombra s'appunta
che 'l vostro mondo face, pria ch' altr' alma
del trïunfo di Cristo fu assunta.
Ben si convenne lei lasciar per palma
in alcun cielo de l'alta vittoria
che s'acquistò con l'una e l'altra palma,
perch' ella favorò la prima gloria
di Iosüè in su la Terra Santa,
che poco tocca al papa la memoria.
La tua città, che di colui è pianta
che pria volse le spalle al suo Fattore
e di cui è la 'nvidia tanto pianta,
produce e spande il maladetto fiore
c'ha disvïate le pecore e li agni,
però che fatto ha lupo del pastore.
Per questo l'Evangelio e i dottor magni
son derelitti, e solo ai Decretali
si studia, sì che pare a' lor vivagni.
A questo intende il papa e ' cardinali;
non vanno i lor pensieri a Nazarette,
là dove Gabrïello aperse l'ali.
Ma Vaticano e l'altre parti elette
di Roma, che son state cimitero
a la milizia che Pietro seguette,
tosto libere fien de l'avoltero."

But so that you may carry off, fulfilled, all the desires born in this sphere, I must proceed still further.

You wish to know who is in this light here beside me that sparkles as if it were a sunbeam in pure water.

Know, then, that within it Rahab finds her peace, and, joined with our order, she is its highest seal.

Into this heaven, where the shadow of your world shrinks to a point, she was taken up before any other soul in the triumph of Christ.

Fitting indeed it was to leave her in one of the heavens as a palm of the great victory acquired by his two palms,

because she aided Joshua's first victory in the Holy Land, which touches the pope's memory but little.

Your city, planted by him who first turned his back on his Maker and whose envy is so much bewailed,

brings forth and spreads the cursed flower that leads the sheep and lambs astray, since it has made a wolf of the shepherd.

For this the Gospel and the great Doctors are forgotten, and only the Decretals are studied, as their margins show.

To this the pope and cardinals attend; their thoughts go not to Nazareth, where Gabriel opened his wings.

But Vatican and the other noble parts of Rome, cemetery of the army that followed Peter,

will soon be freed from such adultery."

NOTES

1–12. After your Charles . . . toward emptiness: The exchange with Charles Martel concludes with the address to Charles's daughter, and with a prophecy, the first of three in the canto (see lines 46–60, 139–42); Charles then turns to God and the narrator condemns transitory goods; cf. 11.1–6 and note.

1. Clémence: Recent commentators see this as Charles's wife, Clémence of Hapsburg, who died soon after Charles (1295). But if so, the narrator addresses a soul in heaven, who can see the future in the divine mind (cf. 17.37–45, etc.), to tell her that he cannot disclose prophecies her husband has just made (Gmelin places him alongside her). Early commentators preferred Clémence of Hungary, Charles Martel's daughter, who married King Louis X of France in 1315; she was still living while Dante was writing *Paradiso* (1316–20). If the daughter is meant, then this is one of only three cantos that begin by addressing a feminine subject (cf. *Inf.* 26.1, Florence personified, and *Par.* 33.1, the Virgin Mary), and the only one to address a living woman (see 8.37 and note).

5–6. deserved weeping . . . the wrongs you suffer: After the death of Charles Martel, his heir, Charles Robert ("his seed"), was stripped in 1296 of his succession through the collusion of his grandfather, Charles II (the Lame, see *Purg.* 20.79–81; *Par.* 6.106–8, 19.127–29 and notes) and his uncle, Robert of Anjou (see 8.145–48 and note) with Boniface VIII (*Inf.* 19.52–57, 27.85–93 and notes; and lines 139–42 and notes). The arrangement was ratified in 1309 by Clement V, completing another Angevin acquisition by expropriation (*Purg.* 20.66 and note). The prophecy here may allude to the defeat of the Angevins by Uguccione della Faggiuola at Montecatini in 1315 (see *Purg.* 23.106–11 and notes), where a brother and a nephew of Robert of Anjou were killed. Use of *inganni* [betrayals, line 2] links the resistance offered by Henry VII in 1311–13 (see *Par.* 17.82 and note) to the treatment of Charles Robert, which dashed hopes raised by Charles Martel, who united in his person Angevin and Hohenstaufen bloodlines. Clement V was deeply implicated on both occasions.

8. the sun that fills it: The sight of God completes the unfulfilled life of Charles Martel: he is finally a sun (see 8.4–12, 31–148, 55–57, 64–66, 76–84 and notes).

10–12. Ah deluded souls . . . toward emptiness: In contrast to Charles's joy, the narrator reproaches those who aim at vanities; cf. 3.28, 5.72–84 and notes.

13–148. And behold . . . from such adultery: The pilgrim interviews two souls, with mention of a third, who exemplify mad love (see 8.2–3 and note). The first introduces the second, who introduces the third, who does not speak.

13–24. And behold . . . rejoicing to do good: Beatrice grants with her eyes "sweet assent" to the pilgrim's desire, preparing topics in the canto related to love and courtship (see notes to lines 32–33, 70–72, 95–96, 97–102, 101–2).

25–66. In the part . . . she had been before: First to speak is Cunizza, youngest child of Ezzelino II da Romano and Adelaide of Mangona, and sister to the notorious tyrant of the Romagna, Ezzelino III (see *Inf.* 12.110–12). She was born about 1198, and after marriage in 1222 to the lord of Verona, Riccardo di San Bonifazio, she was (at Ezzelino's behest) abducted by the poet Sordello (possibly her lover; see *Purg.* 6.58–75 and notes). Subsequently she wandered the world with the Trevisan knight Henry of Bovio; after his murder upon their return to Treviso she was married twice more. She is recorded in the house of the Cavalcanti in Florence in 1265, when she freed her slaves; in 1277 she made her will, leaving as beneficiary her nephew Alessandro degli Alberti of Mangona (see *Inf.* 32.56–57 and note, and *Ep.* 2.1). As she lived beyond 1279, Dante might have met her. She is for Benvenuto a typical child of Venus, "always amorous and full of desire . . . kind, compassionate, and full of pity for those her brother cruelly afflicted."

After identifying herself and characterizing her destiny (25–36; rhetorical exordium, *propositio*, and *narratio*), Cunizza introduces the next soul slated to speak (37–42; a confirming exemplum); his fame cues a series of prophecy-invectives (43–60; *refutatio*) which Cunizza descries in the higher orders of Angels (61–66), before returning to her own circlings. For rhetoric in Venus, see note to lines 52–60.

25–27. In the part . . . of Piave: The Rialto, the central island of Venice, and the springs of the Brenta and Piave rivers delimit the area Dante knew as the March of Treviso; its courts were known for their cultivation of troubadour poetry in Italy.

As in the previous canto (cf. 8.58–60 and notes) geographical and political areas are demarcated by rivers (25–27, 43–44, 46–47, 49, as well as 88–90),

necessary when no fixed political boundaries existed. But Dante's fluvial descriptions are often allegorical (cf. *Inf.* 5.97–99; *Purg.* 14.28–66 and *Inter cantica* there; *Purg.* 15.130–32, 28.121–33 and notes). In astrological terms, clouds and rain, and therefore rising rivers, are governed by Venus and Saturn (see Chapter 1 of Durling/Martinez 1990, and Ptolemy and Haly in Kay 1994); see note to lines 82–93.

25. the degenerate Italian land: The entire Italian peninsula is condemned. An identical expression is aimed at Florence in Hell (*Inf.* 16.9); see also *Purg.* 6.76, and *Inter cantica* to *Purgatorio* 16. Cunizza's fierce opening prepares later attacks.

28. a hill rises up and it does not become very high: This description seems to echo Lucan, *Phar.* 4.11–12: "The fertile land swells to a hill of moderate height and rises up with gentle slope" (cf. 11.43–48, 21.106–7 and notes).

29–30. There once came down . . . a great assault: Compare the eagle's descent in *Purg.* 9.29 and Lucifer's fall in *Purg.* 12.27, precedents for both Ezzelino's partisanship for the imperial eagle as its vicar (see also *Par.* 6.70 and note) and for his demonic reputation. For Ezzelino's "assault" in the March of Treviso and the Veneto as far as Trento and Mantua, cf. *Inf.* 9.54 and notes, recalling language used for Theseus's raid on Hell. Astrologers noted that Venus gave rise to quarrels when in unfavorable aspect (Scot and Bonatti in Kay 1994).

29. a blazing torch: Pietro di Dante relates how Ezzelino's mother dreamt she gave birth to a torch that would set the country ablaze; the topic echoes Hecuba's dream of the birth of her son Paris, who precipitated the Trojan war (Ovid, *Heroides* 16.39–50; see also 12.58–60 and notes). Ezzelino is paired with Obizzo d'Este in the boiling blood of the violent (*Inf.* 12.110–12); see also 3.118–20.

31. From one root both it and I were born: Cunizza and Ezzelino had the same father; as in the Jesse tree, paternal genealogy was often represented as a taproot (see *Purg.* 7.121 and note, and cf. lines 3, *semenza*, and 8.131, 140). The amorous nature of Cunizza and the murderous bent of Ezzelino exemplify how Providence overrules heredity with the stars, as set out by Charles Martel (see 8.94–137 and note). For a similar contrast, see Jacob and Esau in 32.67–72. Dante dramatizes such differences by assigning blood relatives to the three realms of the poem, e.g., Frederick II, Manfred, and Costanza (*Purg.* 3.112–16); the Montefeltri, Guido and Buonconte, father and son (see *Purgatorio* 5, *Inter cantica*), and Corso, Forese, and Piccarda (see *Purg.* 23.13–15, 82–87 and notes, and Bergin 1969).

32–33. Cunizza I was called . . . overcame me: Cunizza's Provençal name *Conissa* possibly alludes to sexual excess (cf. French *con*). But she shines in the heaven of Venus *because* she was "vanquished" by the planet: its effect on her character at birth swept her away; "overcame" (*vinse*) echoes Francesca's "one point . . . overpowered us" (*ci vinse*, *Inf.* 5.132). Cunizza's love is now set on God, but her past amours, insofar as forms of love, were misguided, not evil (see *Purg.* 18.34–39).

34–36. but joyfully I forgive myself . . . to your common folk: Cunizza forgives herself for the erotic inclination that in part shaped her fate. Her logic recalls that of Christ speaking about the woman identified in Christian exegetical tradition as Mary Magdalene (Luke 7.37–50): "Many sins are forgiven her, for she hath loved much."

36. would seem difficult to your common folk: Cunizza supposes that her complacency about her past would shock the vulgar crowd; that the decrees of Providence were puzzling to the many is a commonplace of philosophical texts; cf. *Consol.* 4.m.5, 20–21, 4.pr.6.21–22. See also 20.67–72 and notes, and lines 103–8.

37–42. Of this luminous . . . by the first: The illustrious soul introduced here, but not named until line 94, is the troubadour Folquet (*Folquetus*, corresponding to Old French *Folquet* and Italian *Folchetto*, is used for the troubadour in *DVE* 2.6.6). According to his Provençal biography, or *Vida*, he was the son of a wealthy Genoese merchant who lived in Marseilles. Folquet served his lord, the viscount Barral, while declaring in his poems his love for Barral's wife, Adelaide. In about 1195, after his lord and lady had died, Folquet entered the Cistercian monastery of Le Thoronet, where he soon became abbot (ca. 1200); later he became bishop of Toulouse (1206), and lent support to Dominic of Calaruega (see 12.46–105 and note), then beginning his antiheretical preaching. Folquet was prominent in the crusade against the Albigensian heretics (1208–29; his *Vida* ends there). Other sources attest to Folquet's support of Simon de Montfort in reducing Cathar strongholds.

Folquet's place in the poem is based on both his poetic and religious careers. His poetry was influential for the Sicilian poetic school (see *Purg.* 24.56 and note), and Dante includes in *DVE* 2.6.6 Folquet's canzone "Tan m'abellis l'amoros pessamen" among works worthy for excellence in construction (it is the poem Dante's Arnaut emulates at *Purg.* 26.139–47; see note). Folquet wrote poems renouncing love, as well as exhortations to crusade and a religious *alba* (dawn song; see 23.1–15 and note). Along with the *Vida*, these works have suggested to commentators a pattern of conversion

that warrants Folquet's place in Venus. If Bertran de Born is Dante's poet of arms (*DVE* 2.2.8), and Arnaut the poet of "mad love" [*folor*] (see *Purg.* 26.143), then Folquet, whose rhetorical efforts included antiheretical preaching, may represent Dante's ideal advocate of moral rectitude among troubadours, replacing Giraut de Bornelh (see *Purg.* 26.118–26 and note, and *DVE* 2.2.8); but Folquet is in some sense *also* a poet of love and arms. In this he would parallel Dante, both a love poet and a poet of morality. For accounts of Dante's Folquet, see Picone 1981–83, Rossi 1989a, Squillacioti 1993, and Allegretti-Gorni in *LDT*.

37. Of this luminous dear jewel: Folquet's Latin name as bishop, Fulco, seems to derive from *fulgeo* [shine], and is linked to Cunizza's *refulgo* [shines brightly] in line 33 (see also 8.12 and 8.64). The poet is compared to a gem, but *gioia* [jewel] here also puns on the Provençal troubadour term for erotic fulfillment [*joi*].

40. will enfive itself: Either five century marks will pass, or the year 1300 will be multiplied five times (totaling 6,500 years), before Folquet's fame dims.

43–60. To this no thought . . . the ways of that land: Using Folquet as the positive example, three instances of what results from disregarding the second life that is fame (rhetorical *reprehensio* or refutation): the bloody defeat that the Ghibellines of Vicenza and their ally Can Grande della Scala, imperial vicar in the Veneto and Romagna (lines 46–48), inflicted in 1314 on the Paduan Guelphs, led by Jacopo da Carrara in revolt against imperial authority; the murder in 1312 of Riccardo da Camino, son to "buon Gherardo" (*Purg.* 16.124) and second husband of Giovanna Visconti (see *Purg.* 8.71 and note), captain of Treviso from 1306, by Guelph nobles of the city, after Riccardo's sudden switch of allegiance to the Ghibellines (lines 49–51); and the consignment in 1314 by the bishop of Feltro, Alessandro Novello of Treviso, of four suppliant Ferrarese exiles to the Angevin and pontifical vicar in Ferrara, Pino della Tosa, who executed them as rebels (lines 52–60).

References to the rivers Tagliamento and Adige (line 44) define the March of Treviso, the "swamp" (line 46) refers to the Bacchiglione near Vicenza, the confluence of the Sile and the Cagnano (line 49) marks Treviso (see map, p. 187). Reference to the swamp may imply a topic of political degeneration; see note to lines 25–27.

46–48. but soon will it come to pass . . . to their duty: Most commentators take "change" [*cangiar*] to mean that Can Grande's slaughter of the Paduans stained with blood the waters of the Vicentine swamps (cf. *Inf.* 10.86 and note); readings that see a reference to Paduan attempts to divert the river

account less well for the "beatings" (line 45). Giovanni del Virgilio recommends Can Grande's victory to Dante as a subject for the Latin epic Dante should write (see his *Eclogue* 1.28). Because Albertino Mussato, the Paduan poet crowned in 1315, was imprisoned by Can Grande in Verona during Dante's likely residence there (1316), commentators have discerned allusions to Mussato in the canto (see Martellotti, s.v. "Mussato," *ED*).

49–51. and where Sile and Cagnano . . . the web to snare him: An assassin with a pruning hook cut Riccardo to pieces while he played chess. His proud head echoes the lion of *Inf.* 1.47 and Farinata's erect posture (*Inf.* 10.35–36 and note); Cunizza intensifies her rhetoric with a complex metaphor: the use of a web indicates a conspiracy and fraud (see *Inf.* 17.18 and note).

52–60. Feltro will yet weep . . . the ways of that land: Cunizza's harshest language is for the bishop, who betrays his flock (52–54; "wicked shepherd" is a kind of oxymoron) and fosters bloodshed. She uses a modifier with ironic intent ("generous priest") and refers to the bishop's betrayal as a donation, also ironic in view of the emphasis in the sphere on courtly *larghezza* or generosity (cf. 8.82 and note; generosity was an attribute imparted by Venus; see Scot and Bonatti in Kay 1994). Her elaborate figurative speech is characteristic of sarcastic invective (cf. *Purg.* 6.124–48 and notes) and proper to Venus, which fosters rhetoric in its "children" (*Conv.* 2.13.13; see Additional Note 13).

61–66. Above there are mirrors . . . had been before: After her prophecies, derived from the Thrones, the angelic order assigned to judgments, Cunizza reenters the "wheel"—her group of the blessed in Venus—where she left it. A system of assigned places for the souls in the sphere is here incipient (see Lansing 1977); it will be explicit in the next sphere. For angelic orders as mirrors, see *Ep.* 13.60.

67–69. The other joy . . . a pure ruby in the sun: Folquet, a jewel in lines 37–39, is compared to a balas ruby, possibly named for Balascam in Persia. At *Conv.* 3.7.3–4, gems are said to multiply the light they receive (and see 2.34, 6.127).

70–72. By rejoicing up there . . . as the mind is wicked: The joy of the spirits in the pilgrim's presence acts out the opening of Folquet's canzone, "Tan m'abellis" [It is so pleasing to me]; cf. *letiziar* [to rejoice] at line 70, a synonym of *abbellire*.

73–81. God sees all things . . . as you inme yourself: Like "enheaven" [*inciela*], 3.97; see note), "fortified" [*s'imborga*, 8.40] and "enfive," [*incinqua*], line 40, the

coinages, *inyou*, *inme*, *inhim*s are a legacy of Arnaut Daniel, who in his sestina "Lo ferm voler" (see *Purg.* 26.137–47 and notes) affirms his deeply rooted desire ("it infixes and ennails itself"). By borrowing diction "forged" by Arnaut ("the best craftsman" *Purg.* 26.117), Dante's Folquet repays Dante's Arnaut for his use of Folquet's incipit, "Tan m'abellis" (see *Purg.* 26.140–47 and note).

76–78. Therefore your voice . . . their six wings their robes: Though Folquet circles with the intelligences that move the third sphere (see 8.34–49 and note), the pilgrim describes him as a singer associated with the Seraphim (whose devotion is based in ardent Love; see also 8.26–27 and note). The pilgrim's phrasing echoes Is. 6.2–3, source of the preface to the Mass, where the angels also sing *Hosanna* (cf. 7.1–3; 8.28–30; 9.29; 28.94, 118 and notes). Dante frequently juxtaposes vernacular lyrics to sacred song (see 8.34–49 and note, and Additional Note 4).

82–142. The largest valley . . . from such adultery: Parallel to Cunizza's account, Folquet identifies his dwelling-place (*exordium*, 82–93); names himself and confesses past subjection to mad love (*narratio*, 94–102); delights in the ways of Providence (*confirmatio* 103–8); and appends a positive exemplum (109–26) that triggers invective (*reprehensio*, 127–42). Folquet was "handsome of body, skillful with his tongue, generous with money, therefore truly venereal" (Benvenuto).

82–93. The largest valley . . . warm with its blood: Folquet first names the greatest sea after the surrounding ocean itself: the Mediterranean, which extended, in the erroneous account of Ptolemaic geography, over ninety degrees of latitude, (in reality, it is one third that size, stretching about thirty degrees from Gibraltar to modern Lebanon). In Folquet's terms, what for an observer at Gibraltar would be a horizon circle, touching the eastern end of the sea (where the sun rises), would be a meridian for an observer at the eastern end—that is, an imaginary north-south circle overhead through the poles, crossed by the sun at midday (compare *Purg.* 2.1–6, 4.55–81, 27.1–6, and *Par.* 1.37–45 and notes). Next Folquet marks as the environs of Marseilles (never named in the canto) the stretch of Mediterranean between the river Ebro (in Spain) and the Magra, the stream that divides Liguria from Tuscany (see map, p. 187). Since Marseilles lies within three degrees of the same meridian as medieval Bougie in North Africa (modern Bejaïa, Algeria), the two cities observe sunrise and sunset at about the same time.

Beginning with the circumference of the ocean (line 84), Folquet relies on periphrasis (five in lines 82–90), a figure of his Venus-instilled rhetoric (see

note to lines 52–60), to name longer and shorter coasts, arriving at a line through a point, Marseilles. Mention of horizons, sunsets, and meridians implies observation of the sun in the heavens (see *Conv.* 3.5, and 10.13–21 and note); the pilgrim is in fact approaching the sun.

93. warm with its blood: Dante alludes to the campaign of Caesar (see *Purg.* 18.101–2 and note) and the sea battle within the port of Marseilles, where, according to Lucan (*Phar.* 3.572–73), "the waves were encrusted with blood." Note the implied parallel with the Bacchiglione swamp (lines 46–47).

85–88. between discordant shores . . . a dweller on the shore: Echoing Dido's call for war between Carthage and Rome (*Aen.* 4.628–29), cities on opposing shores [*litora litoribus contraria*]—a case of "mad love" leading to war (see *Inf.* 5.64 and note). The conflict between Europe and Africa during the Crusades is also implied.

96. this heaven is stamped . . . I was by it: In parallel to Cunizza's lines 31–33, Folquet's name, with its suggestion of effulgence (line 32) is associated with the idea of the heaven having imposed ("stamped") its "complexion" on the newborn "child of the planet" (see *Conv.* 4.21.4). Folquet sings of "mad love": nine of the twenty-two poems attributed to him refer to *folors* [folly], often rhymed with *Amors*. But his fame now adds to the luster of the planet itself (see note to 67–69).

97–102. for the daughter of Belus . . . held Iole in his heart: Ovid's works track Folquet's literary and amorous vocations: in addition to the *Ars amatoria* (3.37–40; mention of Phyllis and Dido), the *Remedia amoris* (55–58) and the reproachful fictional epistles *Heroides* 2 (by Phyllis) and 7 (by Dido) are relevant. Rossi 1989a argues that such citations outline Folquet's continuity with Latin literature. The assertion that the canto ignores Folquet's literary work (Beltrami 2004) seems extreme given the many references to Latin, Provençal, and Tuscan poetry and rhetoric.

98–99: wronging both Sichaeus and Creusa . . . befitted my hairs: By loving the Trojan hero Aeneas, Dido, the daughter of Belus the Phoenician (see *Inf.* 5.61–62, *Par* 8.9 and notes) wronged her dead husband, Sichaeus, and Aeneas's dead wife, Creusa. Folquet allows that his passions too were adulterous, as the *Vida* suggests (see note to lines 37–42, and *Purg.* 25.133–35 and note), but he renounced illicit loves when they became indecorous, since "mad" love was held to be unsuited to the aged.

101–2. nor Alcides when he held Iole in his heart: The epithet "Alcides" for Hercules derives from his grandfather Alcaeus, son of the hero Perseus. Hercules' loves for Iole and Omphale notoriously effeminized him, but he is also a figure of moral transformation: after being tormented by the poisoned cloak given him by his jealous wife Deianira (see *Inf.* 12.67–69 and note), his self-immolation on Mount Oeta purifies him and he is deified; see Ovid, *Met.* 9.239–72, *Inf.* 9.98 and note.

103–8. Not for that . . . for the world below: Echoing Cunizza at lines 34–36, Folquet explains that he laughs not because of sinful memories erased by Eunöè (*Purg.* 28.131), but because he grasps how Providence intends the Good that is the final cause (that is, the purpose) of the circling of the heavens around the earth.

109–42. But so that you may carry . . . from such adultery: To satisfy the pilgrim regarding the planet Venus (but also as a corollary; see 8.137–38 and note), Folquet introduces a soul whose presence challenges the complacent (see Matt. 21.31: "The publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you"), and spurs an invective against the effects of cupidity on the pastoral mission of the Church. This section parallels Cunizza's attacks on Treviso and Padua.

112–26. You wish to know . . . the pope's memory but little: Folquet refers to Rahab, the prostitute of Jericho who concealed Joshua's spies and helped deliver the city to Joshua and his army (Jos. 2.1–21, 6.22–25). Christian exegesis saw her faith in Joshua's mission (Jos. 2.9–11) as exemplary and treated her as an allegory of the Church: justified by faith in Christ as well as works (James 2.25), the Church passes from harlotry (cf. Hosea 1.2, 3.1) to espousal with Christ. The red thread Rahab attached to her window so that her house would be spared when the city fell (Jos. 2.18) was taken as a sign of Christ's blood. Rahab's faith in Joshua's victory puts to shame the pope's neglect of holy war; her past harlotry expresses the "adultery" of the Church owing to papal cupidity (see *Inf.* 19.1–4 and note). See Auerbach 1946.

114. as if it were a sunbeam in pure water: Cf. 2.25–36 and note, and for the action of the sun, see lines 68–69, 118–19 and notes. See also lines 32 and 37.

118–25. Into this heaven . . . in the Holy Land: Folquet explains why a prostitute can be the "highest seal" (line 117; cf. lines 32, 96 and notes) in the heaven of Venus: since Joshua extended his arms to achieve a victory (Ecclus. 46.3; cf. *ST* 3a q. 46 a. 4), and his name is the Hebrew form of Jesus, Rahab's role in his

victory foreshadows her status as a trophy ("palm") of Christ's Harrowing of Hell, the victory over death that began when Christ extended his "two palms" on the Cross (cf. *Purg* 3.119–23 and note; and see Additional Note 4).

Crusade preaching treated the victory at Jericho as an Old Testament figure of the crusades. Folquet was present in 1211 at the siege of the heretical stronghold of Lavaur in southern France, where crusaders sang hymns to invoke divine aid; after the city fell, hundreds of Cathars were burned at the stake.

118–19. Into this heaven . . . shrinks to a point: The earth's conical shadow comes to a point in the heaven of Venus. This marks the first major articulation of *Paradiso*, after the three planets where souls appear whose devotion to God when they were alive had been qualified by the effects on their character of astrological influence; see note to 3.29–30 and Additional Note 6.

127–32. Your city . . . a wolf of the shepherd: Folquet's rhetoric of invective culminates with a biblical warning about wolves in sheep's clothing (see Matt. 7.15) and with etymological play; attesting to the vigor implied in its name (Latin *florentia*, "flourishing one"), Florence is a plant of the devil who rebelled against God (cf. *Inf.* 34.35 and note), and whose envy "brought death into the world" (Wisdom 2.24; cf. *Inf.* 1.111 and note). The city's coin, with the lily stamped on its reverse, the "little flower" [*fiorino*] (cf. *Inf.* 30.73–74 and note), excites the cupidity of Boniface VIII, who perverts his pastoral role (cf. *Inf.* 27.85–93 and note) and leads his flock astray.

133–35. for this the Gospel . . . as their margins show: Dante argues that overemphasis on the financially profitable study of canon law (see 11.4–9 and note), as evident from the heavily annotated margins of the books containing the Decretals (see 5.55–60, 10.103–5 and notes), had led to neglect of the Gospels, and of authors like Augustine and Gregory (cf. *Mon.* 3.3.14, and *Ep.* 11.16).

136–38. To this the pope . . . opened his wings: The angel Gabriel announced to Mary in Nazareth (Luke 1.26–38; see *Purg.* 10.34–45 and notes); Bernard of Clairvaux interpreted the name of the town to mean "flower," Dante may intend a contrast with the corrupting florin (Rossi 1989a).

139–42. But Vatican . . . from such adultery: The Vatican is the cemetery of the army of martyrs who followed Christ and Peter (his crucifixion was traditionally located near the Vatican Hill; see *Inf.* 19.22–24 and note). The comeuppance prophesied for the fouling of Peter's Rome by Boniface VIII (see *Inf.* 19.1–3, *Par.* 27.22–26 and notes) remains obscure.

CANTO 10

Guardando nel suo Figlio con l'Amore
che l'uno e l'altro etternalmente spira,
lo primo e ineffabile Valore
quanto per mente e per loco si gira
con tant' ordine fé ch'esser non puote
sanza gustar di lui chi ciò rimira.
Leva dunque, lettor, a l'alte rote
meco la vista, dritto a quella parte
dove l'un moto e l'altro si percuote,
e lì comincia a vagheggiar ne l'arte
di quel maestro che dentro a sé l'ama
tanto che mai da lei l'occhio non parte.
Vedi come da indi si dirama
l'oblico cerchio che i pianeti porta
per sodisfare al mondo che li chiama:
ché se la strada lor non fosse torta,
molta virtù nel ciel sarebbe in vano
e quasi ogne potenza qua giù morta,
e se dal dritto più o men lontano
fosse 'l partire, assai sarebbe manco
e giù e sù de l'ordine mondano.
Or ti riman, lettor, sovra 'l tuo banco,
dietro pensando a ciò che si preliba,
s'esser vuoi lieto assai prima che stanco;
messo t'ho innanzi: omai per te ti ciba,
ché a sé torce tutta la mia cura
quella materia ond' io son fatto scriba.
Lo ministro maggior de la Natura,
che del valor del ciel lo mondo imprenta
e col suo lume il tempo ne misura,

CANTO 10

Sun: God's art in the heavens—the circle of twelve teachers of theology—saint Thomas Aquinas names them

Gazing at his Son with the Love that both
eternally breathe, the first, ineffable Power
made all that turns in the mind or through
space with so much order that one who
contemplates it cannot be without a taste of him.
Lift therefore your gaze to the high wheels
with me, reader, straight to that place where the
one and the other motion strike each other,
and there begin to marvel at the art of that
Master who within himself loves it so much that
he never moves his eye away from it.
See branching off from there the oblique
circle that carries the planets, so as to satisfy
the world that calls for them:
for if their path were not twisted, much
of the power in the heavens would be in vain,
and dead almost every potentiality down here,
and if its departure from the straight were
greater or smaller, much would be lacking, both
below and above, in the order of the world.
Now stay there, reader, on your bench,
thinking back on your foretaste here, if you wish
to rejoice long before you tire;
I have set before you: now feed yourself, for
all my care is claimed by that matter of which I
have become the scribe.
The greatest minister of Nature, which
stamps the world with the power of the heavens
and measures time to us with its light,

con quella parte che sù si rammenta
congiunto, si girava per le spire
in che più tosto ognora s'appresenta,
e io era con lui, ma del salire
non m'accors' io se non com' uom s'accorge,
anzi 'l primo pensier, del suo venire.
È Bëatrice quella che sì scorge
di bene in meglio sì subitamente
che l'atto suo per tempo non si sporge.
Quant' esser convenia da sé lucente
quel ch' era dentro al sol dov' io entra'mi,
non per color, ma per lume parvente!
Perch' io lo 'ngegno e l'arte e l'uso chiami,
sì nol direi che mai s'imaginasse,
ma creder puossi e di veder si brami.
E se le fantasie nostre son basse
a tanta altezza non è maraviglia,
ché sopra 'l sol non fu occhio ch'andasse.
Tal era quivi la quarta famiglia
de l'alto Padre, che sempre la sazia,
mostrando come spira e come figlia.
E Bëatrice cominciò: "Ringrazia,
ringrazia il Sol de li angeli, ch' a questo
sensibil t'ha levato per sua grazia!"
Cor di mortal non fu mai sì digesto
a divozione e a rendersi a Dio
con tutto 'l suo gradir cotanto presto,
come a quelle parole mi fec' io,
e sì tutto 'l mio amore in lui si mise
che Bëatrice eclissò ne l'oblio.
Non le dispiacque, ma sì se ne rise
che lo splendor de li occhi suoi ridenti
mia mente unita in più cose divise.
Io vidi più folgór vivi e vincenti
far di noi centro e di sé far corona,
più dolce in voce che in vista lucenti:
così cinger la figlia di Latona
vedem talvolta quando l'aere è pregno,
che ritenga il fil che fa la zona.

joined with that part mentioned above, was
wheeling through the spirals in which it rises
ever earlier,
and I was with it, but I did not perceive the ascent,
except as one perceives a first thought before it comes.
Beatrice is she who guides from good
to better so swiftly that her act does not extend in
time.
How bright in itself had to be whatever was
within the sun, where I entered, not by color but
by manifest light!
Though I call on my wit and art and practice, I
could never tell it so that it could be imagined,
but it can be believed, and let the sight of it be
yearned for.
And if our imaginations are too low for such a
height it is no wonder, for no eye has ever seen
intensity beyond the sun's.
Such was the brightness there of the fourth
family of the high Father, who always satisfies
them, showing how he breathes and how begets.
And Beatrice began: "Give thanks, give
thanks to the Sun of the angels, who to this
visible one has lifted you with his grace!"
Mortal heart has never been so concentrated
to devotion and so swift to surrender itself to
God with all consent,
as at those words I became, and I so placed
all my love in him that it eclipsed Beatrice with
forgetfulness.
She was not displeased but so smiled that
the splendor of her laughing eyes divided my
united mind into a plurality of things.
I saw many lively, overpowering splendors
make of us their center and of themselves a
crown, even sweeter in voice than bright to see:
girt thus at times we see the daughter of
Latona, when the air is moist enough to retain
the thread that makes her belt.

Ne la corte del Cielo, ond' io rivegno,
si trovan molte gioie care e belle
tanto che non si posson trar del regno,
e 'l canto di quei lumi era di quelle;
chi non s'impenna sì che la sù voli,
dal muto aspetti quindi le novelle.
Poi, sì cantando, quelle ardenti soli
si fuor girati intorno a noi tre volte,
come stelle vicine a' fermi poli,
donne mi parver, non da ballo sciolte,
ma che s'arrestin tacite, ascoltando
fin che le nove note hanno ricolte.
E dentro da l'un sentì cominciar: "Quando
lo raggio de la grazia, onde s'accende
verace amore e che poi cresce amando,
multiplicato in te tanto resplende
che ti conduce su per quella scala
u' sanza risalir nessun discende,
qual ti negasse il vin de la sua fiala
per la tua sete, in libertà non fora
se non com' acqua ch' al mar non si cala.
Tu vuo' saper di quai piante s'infiora
questa ghirlanda che 'ntorno vagheggia
la bella donna ch' al ciel t'avvalora.
Io fui de li agni de la santa greggia
che Domenico mena per cammino
u' ben s'impingua se non si vaneggia.
Questi che m'è a destra più vicino
frate e maestro fummi, ed esso Alberto
è di Cologna, e io Thomas d'Aquino.
Se sì di tutti li altri esser vuo' certo,
di retro al mio parlar ten vien, col viso
girando su per lo beato serto.
Quell'altro fiammeggiare esce del riso
di Grazïan, che l'uno e l'altro foro
aiutò sì che piace in Paradiso.
L'altro ch' appresso addorna il nostro coro
quel Pietro fu che con la poverella
offerse a Santa Chiesa suo tesoro.

In the court of Heaven, whence I return, there are many jewels so precious and beautiful that they cannot be taken from the kingdom,
and the song of those lights was one of them; whoever does not grow the feathers to fly up there can expect to hear news of it from the mute.
When, singing thus, those burning suns had revolved about us three times, like stars near the fixed poles,
they seemed to me like ladies not freed from the dance, but pausing silently, listening until they have gathered the new notes.
And within one of them I heard begin: "Since the ray of grace, by which true love is kindled and then grows by loving,
so shines, multiplied in you, that it leads you up along the ladder that no one descends without climbing it again,
whoever should deny the wine of his flask to your thirst, would not be free except as water not descending to the sea.
You wish to know with what plants this garland blooms that woos from all sides the beautiful lady who strengthens you for Heaven.
I was among the lambs of the holy flock that Dominic leads by a path where one fattens well if one does not wander.
He who is closest to me on my right was brother and master to me, and he is Albert of Cologne, and I Thomas of Aquino.
If you wish to be apprised of all the others, come and with sight follow my words, circling through the blessed wreath.
That next flame comes forth from the smile of Gratian, who helped both forums so much that Heaven is pleased.
The next who adorns our choir was that Peter who with the poor widow offered up his treasure to Holy Church.

La quinta luce, ch' è tra noi più bella,
spira di tale amor che tutto 'l mondo
là giù ne gola di saper novella:
entro v'è l'alta mente u' sì profondo
saver fu messo che, se 'l vero è vero,
a veder tanto non surse il secondo.
Appresso vedi il lume di quel cero
che giù in carne più a dentro vide
l'angelica natura e 'l ministero.
Ne l'altra piccioletta luce ride
quell'avvocato de' tempi cristiani
del cui latino Augustin si provide.
Or se tu l'occhio de la mente trani
di luce in luce dietro a le mie lode,
già de l'ottava con sete rimani.
Per vedere ogne ben dentro vi gode
l'anima santa che 'l mondo fallace
fa manifesto a chi di lei ben ode;
lo corpo ond' ella fu cacciata giace
giuso in Cieldauro, ed essa da martiro
e da essilio venne a questa pace.
Vedi oltre fiammeggiar l'ardente spiro
d'Isidoro, di Beda e di Riccardo,
che a considerar fu più che viro.
Questi, onde a me ritorna il tuo riguardo,
è 'l lume d'uno spirto che 'n pensieri
gravi a morir li parve venir tardo:
essa è la luce etterna di Sigieri,
che, leggendo nel Vico de li Strami,
silogizzò invidïosi veri."
Indi, come orologio che ne chiami
ne l'ora che la sposa di Dio surge
a mattinar lo sposo perché l'ami,
che l'una parte e l'altra tira e urge,
tin tin sonando con sì dolce nota
che 'l ben disposto spirto d'amor turge:
così vid' ïo la gloriosa rota
muoversi e render voce a voce in tempra
e in dolcezza ch'esser non pò nota
se non colà, dove gioir s'insempra.

The fifth light, the loveliest among
us, breathes from such love that the whole
world down there is greedy to have news of it:
within it is the lofty mind where
such deep wisdom was placed that, if truth
is true, no second ever rose to see so much.
Next you see the light of that candle which
below, in the flesh, saw deepest into the nature
and the ministry of angels.
In the next little light smiles that advocate
of Christian times of whose Latin Augustine
made use.
Now if you train the eye of your mind from
light to light after my praisings, you still thirst to
know the eighth light.
Within it, joying in the vision of all Goodness,
is that holy soul who proves the world deceptive
to anyone who listens well;
the body from which it was driven lies down
below in Cieldauro, and from martyrdom and
exile it came to this peace.
Beyond, see flaming the ardent spirit of
Isidore, of Bede, and of Richard, who was more
than man in contemplation.
This one, from whom your gaze returns to
me, is the light of a spirit who, in his grave
thoughts, found that death came too slowly:
it is the eternal light of Siger, who,
lecturing in Straw Street, made syllogisms
of envied truths."
Then, like a clock that calls us in the hour
when the bride of God rises to sing a dawn
song to the Bridegroom, that he may love her,
whose one part pulls and the other pushes,
sounding *tin tin* with so sweet a note that a well-
disposed spirit swells with love:
so I saw that glorious wheel turning, voice
answering voice, with tempering and sweetness
that cannot be known
except there, where rejoicing forevers itself.

NOTES

1–27. Gazing at his Son . . . become the scribe: Arrival in the sun, beyond the shadow of the earth, is a major transition in the *Comedy* as a whole as well as in the *Paradiso* (for the parallels between the cantos of the sun and the corresponding cantos of *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, see Additional Note 6). This proem focuses particularly on the intersection of the celestial equator and the ecliptic at the point of the vernal equinox. The importance of the inclination of the ecliptic to the equator had been recognized since antiquity; it was central to Plato's conception of the cosmos and the basis of the microcosmic structure of the human body (see Boethius' "O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas," pp. 686–94, an important model for Dante since the "Rime petrose"; see Durling/Martinez 1990). For Christians the intersection of the two motions was a chief instance of the wondrous art of the Creator, just as the sun itself, "the greatest minister of Nature" (line 28) and "the father of every mortal life" (22.116), is the chief visible analogue of the Creator himself (*Conv.* 3.12); cf. Additional Note 12.

The passage falls into three distinct parts: (1) the relations among the Persons of the Trinity in the creation of the world (1–6); (2) the Creator's art revealed in the inclination of the ecliptic (7–21); (3) injunction to the reader and transition back to the narrative (22–27): five central terzinas surrounded by first and third parts of two terzinas each (see the note to lines 13–15). Like "O qui perpetua," the passage is a microcosm, a model of the cosmos: its origin, its structure, and its goal, the return to God, which in true Platonic fashion must begin with the contemplation of the heavens (*Timaeus* 47a–c).

1–6. Gazing at his Son . . . a taste of him: God the Father ("the first, ineffable Power," the first Person of the Trinity) is represented as gazing at his Son, the second Person of the Trinity, because the Son is the Logos, identified by Christians as corresponding to Plotinus's principle of *noûs* [mind], containing the eternal ideas, or forms, of things (see Additional Note 10; cf. "O qui perpetua," lines 4–8). The Holy Spirit, the Love breathing between Father and Son, is essential to the creation, which expresses God's love of his creatures; cf. "O qui perpetua," lines 5–6.

4–6. made all that turns . . . a taste of him: That the order of the universe reveals the power and godhead of its Creator has always been a central Judeo-Christian theme, like the joy deriving from the contemplation of God in his works (cf. Ps. 8, 18, 91—with *Purg.* 28.74–81—and Rom. 1.20); these are also

central subjects of the *Paradiso*. Compare 1.103–8, especially 104–5: the order of the universe "is a form that makes the universe resemble God."

4. all that turns in the mind or through space: Note the implicit analogy between intellectual/spiritual activity, whether of angels or human beings, and the turning of the heavens; this is the kernel of the idea of the microcosmic relation; for self-awareness—reflexivity—as the hallmark of intellect, cf. *Purg.* 25.75: "sé in sé rigira" and "O qui perpetua" lines 13–17, especially "in semet reditura" [to return into itself] (for the microcosmic head, see Additional Note 14).

6. a taste of him: Note the food metaphor, which will be more fully developed in lines 22–25.

7–21. Lift therefore . . . order of the world: The third of the six addresses to readers in the *Paradiso*, now explicit (see the note to 2.1–18), and in many respects the most important. The reader is imagined as seated on a bench, no doubt before a desk or lectern of some sort, in a realistic situation that mirrors the real situation of the writing poet. He is asked to interrupt his reading in order to look up at the heavens *with the poet* ("Lift . . . with me"), who is thus also imagined as interrupting his activity. This emphasis is picked up again at the end of the passage, leaving the reader on his bench, meditating, while the poet returns to his writing (lines 22–27). The lines explore a series of parallels between the actions of the two humans and the celestial motions that are contemplated. The lines fall into three parts: (1) preparation and generalization (lines 7–12); (2) sharpened focus on the branching (lines 13–15); (3) the importance of the exact angle of branching (lines 15–21). For the centrality of the sun and of the cantos of the sun, see Additional Note 3.

7–12. Lift therefore . . . away from it: Six lines lead up to the main statement, stressing its importance and beauty. The "art of that Master" is once again the Logos.

7–9. Lift therefore . . . strike each other: The instantaneous movement of directing the eye ("leva . . . dritto" [lift . . . straight]) mirrors the "striking" together of the celestial motions. The phrase "high wheels" refers of course to the heavenly spheres (cf. 1.76, 4.58, 6.126), as always with emphasis on the regularity of their motion (Consoli in *ED*, s.v. rota), and here calling attention to the great circles at their extreme circumference.

10–12. and there begin . . . eye away from it: God's eye is fixed on his art, the Logos; note that all three Persons of the Trinity (Power, Logos, Love) are referred to, as in lines 1–3.

13–15. See branching off . . . calls for them: The principal focus, the "branching off" [si dirama], is now reached; it has been reserved for the central terzina of the central five terzinas devoted to the intersection of celestial equator and ecliptic because it occupies the central position in the cosmos (cf. "O qui perpetua," lines 13–17, with notes, and see the final note on pp. 693–94). The need of the world for the planets (lines 14–15) includes reference to 8.115–35, Carlo Martello's explanation of the providential role of the planets in overriding heredity.

13. branching off: Dante's "branching off" is a tree metaphor. As Plato observed (*Timaeus* 36c), the intersection of the two motions resembles the Greek letter *chi* [χ], where medieval Christians recognized the cross and the first letter of *Christ* (see Freccero 1968). Dante refers to the idea also in 1.39 but leaves it implicit (see the note to "O qui perpetua" lines 15–17).

16–21. for if their path . . . order of the world: The importance of the inclination of the ecliptic to the equator: (a) the general need for the inclination: if the rays of the sun struck the earth directly at the equator, without variation, temperatures would be much higher, as well as unchanging (in antiquity and the Middle Ages, it was believed that the tropical zone was too hot for human habitation); the seasons would not exist; the conjunction of the sun with the signs of the zodiac, essential to the generation of plants and animals, would not take place; (b) the exact angle is also critically important.

16–18. if their path . . . potentiality down here: The varying relative positions of the planets is the chief factor in enabling the differentiation of horoscopes. It had been known since antiquity that the paths of the planets did not coincide with the ecliptic but, except for the sun's, were themselves variously inclined in relation to it. Without the changes in the aspects of the planets, their power could not be fully exerted, and the enormous possibilities for variety in living things could not be fulfilled; there is an implicit reference to the principle of plenitude.

19–21. and if its departure . . . order of the world: The critical importance of the exact angle of the ecliptic (23° 27′) had also been recognized since antiquity: the dimensions and climates of the five zones (two arctic, two temperate, one tropical) are its direct result. Aristotle had recognized that all life on earth depended on it, but had supposed that the seasons depended on the sun's coming closer as it rose in the sky when north of the equator (*De gen. et corr.* 2.10 [336b]); today it is understood that the seasons depend on the precise angles at which the rays of the sun strike the earth (the earth is actually closest to the sun at the winter solstice, because of its slightly elliptical orbit).

22–27. Now stay there . . . become the scribe: The concluding portion of this proem. The reader's and the poet's tasks now diverge.

22–25. Now stay there . . . now feed yourself: The reader, now explicitly imagined on a bench (note to lines 7–21), is to meditate on what he or she has just read and to delight in deeper contemplation of God's art (an explicit reminder that the poem does not present its full meanings at a casual glance but requires study and thought; also that its subject lies outside itself, in the real world). The food metaphor hinted at in line 6 is now more fully developed: lines 7–21 are a "foretaste," food that the poet has "set before" the reader (line 15), who must now "feed" him- or herself (see lines 49–51 and 17.130–32, with notes; for the importance of the food metaphor in the *Comedy* as a whole, see Durling 1981a).

26–27. for all my care . . . become the scribe: The branching of the poet's path away from the reader's is analogous to that of the ecliptic: the reader is enjoined to continue in the direction established in lines 7–21; the poet's attention is "twisted" (line 26), like the ecliptic, back to the matter of his narration, the imagined events of the poem (see the note on lines 34–36); it calls him back, as the world calls the planets in lines 14–15, with no doubt an implicit reference to the parallel between God's art and the poet's, and to Dante's hope that the poem would help correct the wretched plight of humanity (see 17.124–42, with notes). The notion encountered in some commentaries that the term "scribe" [scriba] here indicates a mere chronicling by the poet disregards the entire theme of the relation of the poet with the sun (see Additional Note 13).

28–39. The greatest minister . . . extend in time: Twelve lines form the formal transition from the sphere of Venus to the sun (now first explicitly named, though periphrastically). Three terzinas (lines 28–36) on the arrival; one on the role of Beatrice (lines 37–39).

28–30. The greatest minister . . . with its light: The sun is "the greatest minister of Nature" because it directly controls the generation and corruption of all living things, and because the influence of the other planets is transmitted through their reflecting the light of the sun (line 29: it "stamps the world with the power of the heavens"). Also, according to Gen. 1.14, the sun and the moon are made "to divide the day and the night, and . . . [to] be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years." In the analogy of the sciences with the heavens, the heaven of the sun corresponds to arithmetic (since computation of time is the most important use of arithmetic).

31–33. joined with that part . . . rises ever earlier: That is, the sun was near the vernal equinox (see 1.43–44, with note) and thus moving ever farther north of the equator on the ecliptic and therefore rising earlier every day.

34–36. and I was . . . before it comes: The transition from Venus to the sun was instantaneous, as quick as thought (see next note). That the pilgrim is with the sun, following the ecliptic, completes the suggestion in lines 26–27. For the poet and the poet's poem are like the sun, cf. the claim for the *Convivio* (associated with the food metaphor—with reference to the miracle of the loaves and fishes, Matt. 14.14–21—governing the entire first book): "This [work] will be that barley bread that will satisfy thousands, and the remnants will fill my baskets to overflowing. This will be a new light, a new sun that will rise where the accustomed one will have set, and it will give light to those that are in shadows and darkness, instead of the usual sun that does not shine for them" (*Conv.* 1.13.11–12).

37–39. Beatrice is she . . . extend in time: The most probable interpretation of this statement about Beatrice is that she represents the principle of spiritual/intellectual illumination (integral to divine revelation; cf. Singleton 1957); medieval theories of light regarded the radiation of light as instantaneous. This is one of the critical passages on the nature of the pilgrim's ascent, which is intellectual and imaginative, not bodily (see Introduction, pp. 14–17).

40–51. How bright in itself . . . and how begets: The introduction to the encounter with the teachers of theology: they are "whatever was within the sun," and their brightness exceeds all imagining (as it must, to be discernible within the sun). The mention of color in line 42 distinguishes between the proper object of bodily sight (identified by Galen as color itself; cf. Galen 1968, Grant 1977) and light itself. This is the first of an increasing number of instances of the "inexpressibility topos" (see Curtius 1953).

49–51. Such was the brightness . . . and how begets: This "fourth family" (denizens of the fourth planet, the sun) becomes visible only from line 64 on. That souls in bliss may see the inner relations of the Persons of the Trinity (the begetting of the Son by the Father and the breathing of the Holy Spirit between Father and Son: cf. lines 1–3) has not previously been said; probably it is a mark of the increasing degrees of beatitude. "Satisfies" [sazia] is a continuation of the food metaphor, now with Eucharistic overtones.

52–63. And Beatrice began . . . a plurality of things: A particularly brilliant transition to the encounter with the souls in the sun, based on the analogies

governing the heaven of the sun: (a) the analogy between the visible sun and God (especially the Son; for the special status of this analogy, see the note to lines 1–27); (b) the analogy between the preachers who illuminate the faithful and both terms of the first analogy

52–54. And Beatrice began . . . with his grace: Among the several instances of Beatrice's urging the pilgrim to give thanks (2.28–30) and his doing so spontaneously (14.88–93), this is the most emphatic and unique in stating the analogy. The "Sun of the angels" is God, but especially the second Person of the Trinity.

55–60. Mortal heart . . . with forgetfulness: We translate "digesto" as "concentrated"; the term has a great richness of meanings (see Durling 1981a), including "classified" and "set in order," as well as the physiological "extracted nourishment from." The food metaphor is much more distantly operative here than earlier.

59–60. I so placed . . . with forgetfulness: The pilgrim's love so completely and directly focuses on God that it disregards the intermediary, Beatrice. Note the sun image: the ecliptic, which we are following (see the note to lines 34–36), is the circle that the moon (whose orbit is inclined to it) must be crossing for eclipses of sun or moon to occur.

61–63. She was not displeased . . . a plurality of things: The pilgrim has been gazing into Beatrice's eyes even as he has forgotten her in his prayer to the "Sun of the angels." The sudden refraction of his "united mind" (concentrated on God) into this new plural vision reflects the traditional notion that the light of the sun, unified in itself, contains the forms of all things; in this, as in other respects, it is the created thing most similar to God (see the note to 13.52–60, Litt 1963).

64–148. I saw many . . . rejoicing forevers itself: The rest of the canto is devoted to the first of three circles that will surround Beatrice and the pilgrim in the heaven of the sun (the second will arrive in Canto 12, the third in Canto 14; on the relations among them, see Additional Note 3). The number of the new splendors is not stated explicitly; we must count until we reach line 138; it should not surprise us that it will be a solar number.

64–81. I saw many . . . the new notes: The new splendors form a circular "crown" with the pilgrim and Beatrice in the center; they are singing and, as we learn only in lines 76–78, revolving about them. They are like so many suns both in their brightness and in their circular motion; perhaps there is also an allusion to the music of the spheres in the sweetness of their song.

Some commentators (such as Forti in *LDS*) have been misled by the image of the lunar halo (see next note) to suppose that the circle of splendors is undifferentiated, but its plurality is emphasized from the outset.

67–69. girt thus at times . . . makes her belt: The daughter of Latona is the moon, which is sometimes surrounded by a halo; the clothing metaphor in"the thread that makes her belt" is an early anticipation of the theme of Canto 14; the atmospheric moisture that causes the halo falls in dew, a traditional metaphor for God's grace. For the suggestion that Beatrice corresponds to the moon, representing the Church, see Freccero 1968.

70–75. In the court of Heaven . . . from the mute: The surprising comparison of the sweetness of the song with the universally acknowledged beauty of jewels (associated on earth with the richness and splendor of royal courts) probably indicates an utter clarity and purity (the song is probably unison rather than polyphonic).

74–75. whoever does not . . . from the mute: In other words, it cannot be expressed in language; cf. 1.70–72, with note. This is again a version of the inexpressibility topos, perhaps already proverbial, but many of Dante's pithy expressions have been adopted in everyday speech.

74. whoever does not . . . to fly up there: For the metaphor of wings, see the note to *Inf.* 26.125 and *Purg.* 27.121–23, with note (the ultimate biblical source is Ps. 54.7).

76–78. When, singing thus . . . near the fixed poles: The three revolutions of the circle of souls is perhaps proleptic of the future presence of three circles. That their revolutions are like stars near the poles indicates both that they move relatively slowly (since stars close to the equator move fastest) and that they maintain fixed distances, presumably uniform, from each other (see also the note to 13.16–18). For the tradition of the dance of the stars, see Freccero 1968.

76–77. those burning suns had revolved about us: The analogy of these souls with the sun is now made explicit, and the analogy of their motion with the sun's about the earth is plain (see the note on lines 139–48).

79–81. they seemed to me . . . the new notes: As we will soon learn, all these souls were men, and the majority of them clergymen, but the feminine gender of the term *anima* and the idea of the round dance itself suggest an image of the graceful pause of noble ladies waiting, attuning themselves to the changed music ("the new notes"), before beginning to dance again.

82–138. And within one . . . envied truths: In one long speech the spokesman of these souls will proclaim the assurance of the pilgrim's salvation and identify his companions. The first two are members of the Dominican order (the "Order of Preachers," founded by saint Dominic; see 12.32–102); in the lively controversies of the thirteenth century, the Dominicans strongly represented the principle of the "primacy of the intellect" (see Additional Note 3). All the speeches of the denizens of the sun (Thomas, Bonaventura, and Solomon) are said to occur from "within" their radiance; see the note to 14.46–51.

83–87. Since the ray . . . climbing it again: The speaker begins with the most emphatic prediction of the pilgrim's ultimate salvation that has appeared so far in the poem: God's grace instills in its recipient "true love," and loving brings ever more grace (the ray is "multiplied"); the multiplied light of grace in the pilgrim is so strong that it enables him to climb the ladder of contemplation, and whoever climbs it, though he or she must descend once more to earthly life, is assured of reascending it (after death).

88–90. whoever should deny . . . descending to the sea: The pilgrim's special grace is so evident that the blessed can no more refuse to answer his questions than water can refuse to flow downward, unless blocked (closely parallel to 1.136–38, on the ascent itself, which uses the analogy of fire).

91–93. You wish to know . . . for Heaven: Note the metaphor of a garland of flowers (with implicit reference to the sun as bringing forth flowers). The souls are "wooing" Beatrice, shining on her, expressing their love to her (cf. lines 139–48, with notes). The terminology and sentiments in these lines and at the end of the canto draw on the traditions of veneration of the Virgin (flowers, garlands, wooing, amorous singing), motifs that are increasingly prominent toward the end of the *Paradiso*.

94–138. I was among . . . envied truths: Fifteen terzinas identifying the circle of souls. It is important to distinguish these souls from the contemplatives in the heaven of Saturn (Cantos 21 and 22): here we are encountering preachers and teachers the light of whose intellect illuminates the world, and this is the basis of the analogy with the sun (cf. *Inf.* 1.17–18, with note).

94–99. I was among . . . Thomas of Aquino: The speaker first identifies himself as a Dominican friar, then identifies his closest neighbor (the only other Dominican present) and finally names himself.

95–96. a path where . . . does not wander: The remark will puzzle the pilgrim and require explanation in 11.123–39.

97–99. He who is closest . . . Albert of Cologne: The German Dominican Albert (1206?–80), commonly called "the Great" [Magnus], was an extraordinarily wide-ranging intellect and prolific writer of commentaries on the natural sciences, the major Neoplatonic texts, Aristotle, and Aristotle's Arabic commentators. He taught at Paris (where Thomas was among his pupils), was made bishop of Regensburg, and for his last ten years taught in Cologne (hence his epithet; he was born in Lauingen in Bavaria). Albert's influence on Dante is even more pervasive than that of Thomas.

99. and I Thomas of Aquino: Thomas Aquinas (1224–74) quickly became the most influential teacher of theology among the Dominicans, prominent in the faculties of theology at Paris, Rome, and Bologna, and his reconciliation of the claims of faith and reason was declared by the Council of Trent (1545–63) to be the official theology of the Roman Church. Aquino (near Naples) is close to Thomas's birthplace (*Aquinas* is a Latin adjective of place of origin, in modern Ital. *Aquinate*; cf. *Ravennate* [from Ravenna]).

100–102. If you wish . . . the blessed wreath: An indication permitting the reader to visualize the sequence of identifications.

103–5. That next flame . . . Heaven is pleased: Gratian (?–1160), a member of the Camaldolese order based in Bologna, was the codifier of canon law (ecclesiastical law) in his *Decretum*, a reference work not superseded until 1918. The meaning of "both forums" has been disputed: the possibilities are: (a) both canon law and civil law (the latter indirectly); (b) both distributive and penal canon law; (c) the two Lateran Councils (in 1123 and 1139) that legislated strictly in favor of priestly celibacy in rulings that Gratian approved and analyzed at length (see Brundage 1987).

106–8. The next who . . . to Holy Church: This is the Italian Peter Lombard (ca. 1100–1160), an Augustinian canon at the important and influential monastery of saint Victor in Paris and from 1159 bishop of Paris, who produced a systematic collection of theological pronouncements by patristic writers that became the foundation of all instruction in theology in the West, the *Liber sententiarum*. Every aspiring theologian began by writing a commentary on it. The reference to the parable of the widow's mite (Mark 12.41–44) adopts Peter's own description of his book.

109–14. The fifth light . . . to see so much: Solomon, famous for his wisdom, is the one the whole world wishes news of, because his salvation was sometimes put in doubt. As author of Ecclesiastes, he was suspected of denying the

immortality of the soul; he worshipped the Canaanite gods and was thought excessively uxorious (4 Kings 11.1–13). The question was disputed among the rabbis, and Philippe de Harvengt (d. 1184) wrote a treatise, *De damnatione Salomonis* (*PL* 203; cf. Sarolli 1971, *DTC* 12, Durling 2001a). Cf. 13.138–42, with notes.

The analogy between the king and the sun was widespread (see Kantorowicz 1957); Solomon is the only king in the circle, but he is its most beautiful light (line 109), and line 114, which puzzles the pilgrim, will receive extended commentary in Canto 13 (cf. the note to 8.31–148). The emphasis on Solomon's being fifth in the circle may be a reference to the Canticle of Canticles, which celebrates the marriage of the soul and Christ (cf. lines 139–48, with note): the number five symbolizes marriage, being the sum of male and female numbers (three and two respectively); cf. the note to *Inf.* 5.100–107. (For Solomon as "the Beloved," see 13.111, with note.)

115–17. Next you see . . . ministry of angels: This is the Pseudo-Dionysius, an unknown fifth- or sixth-century Neoplatonic theologian whose works, of enormous influence throughout the Middle Ages (see Rorem 1993), were attributed to the Dionysius the Areopagite, converted by saint Paul (Acts 17.22–34); he was supposed to have been the first bishop of Paris and to have carried his severed head down from the Mount of Martyrs (that is, Montmartre) to his burial place, now the basilica of saint Denis. He was the author of *The Celestial Hierarchy*, referred to here, and of other treatises, of which *On the Divine Names* was also an important influence on Dante.

118–20. In the next little . . . Augustine made use: Several candidates have been nominated for this post; Toynbee 1895 showed definitively that the reference is to Paulus Orosius (ca. 390–420?), whose *History against the Pagans*, written at the suggestion of Augustine of Hippo, undertook to show how much better Christian times had been than pagan times (see the note to 6.34–96).

121–29. Now if you train . . . to this peace: Reminders of the running total will cease after this eighth light, that of the great Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, buried in the basilica of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro in Pavia (see the headnote to "O qui perpetua," pp. 688–89). The achievement praised here is his demonstration, in his *Consolation of Philosophy*, of the ephemeral nature of all earthly goods, subject to the whims of Fortune. Since, as Macrobius showed, two points define a line, three points a plane, and eight points a cube, the basis of the element earth (*Comm.* 1.5.7), perhaps Boethius' occupying the eighth position alludes to his having seen the true nature of the

element earth (for eight as signifying the entire cosmos, see *Comm.* 1.5.8 and Freccero 1968).

130–31. Beyond, see flaming . . . and of Richard: After three terzinas allotted to Boethius, we now have three figures named in one terzina. Isidore is saint Isidore (ca. 570–630), bishop of Seville, the most prominent figure in the early history of Christianity in Spain, author of the extremely influential encyclopedia *Etymologies*. The sainted Venerable Bede (673–735), the most prolific writer of the Anglo-Saxons, wrote a history of England and numerous biblical commentaries; his *Computus* (treatise on the date of Easter) was especially widely used. Richard of Saint Victor (ca. 1110–73), prior of the Augustinians of Saint Victor in Paris, wrote treatises on mystical contemplation (*De contemplatione, sive Beniamin maior*, and *De preparatione animi ad contemplationem, sive Beniamin minor*) that may have influenced Dante.

132. in contemplation: "Contemplation" is our rendering of "considerare;" for its etymology (from "to move with the heavenly bodies"—cf. note to lines 7–31) see Freccero 1968.

133–38. This one, from . . . envied truths: Siger of Brabant (ca. 1235–ca. 1282), a professor in the faculty of arts at Paris, a specialist on Averroes (see the note to *Inf.* 4.142–44). The extent to which his doctrines were heretical is still debated, though the majority view now is that he had changed his views under Aquinas's influence. A number of theses were condemned by the bishop of Paris in 1277 (it seems clear that Siger had abandoned the Averroist position on the unity of the human intellect); Siger insisted that his faith was orthodox and appealed to the pope in Orvieto. There he was not imprisoned but placed under house surveillance; a few years later he was murdered, apparently by his deranged secretary (this partly speculative account has been challenged by Thijssen 1998 and Gauthier 1984). Much controversy has been occasioned by Dante's including him here (cf. 12.140–41, with note; and see next note). Aquinas, who praises him here, was in life one of his principal opponents (in his *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas*—see *Purg.* 25.61–66, with note); in Heaven mutual understanding is perfect. Scott 2008 is an excellent survey of the controversies.

137–38. lecturing in Straw Street . . . envied truths: The Rue du Fouarre, in the heart of the Latin Quarter in Paris, was the location of arts-faculty lecture halls (the reference has been implausibly adduced as evidence that Dante had studied in Paris). The phrase "silogizzò invidiosi veri" has been much debated. "Silogizzò" presumably means "constructed valid syllogisms" (cf. 11.1–3, with

note). "Invidiosi" may mean "enviable" (i.e., "incomparably brilliant"); following Gilson 1939, Nardi 1956a, who defends Siger's orthodoxy, takes it to mean "targeted by the envious," and to refer to Siger's insistence on the autonomy of philosophy (as separate from theology).

139–48. Then, like a clock . . . rejoicing forevers itself: The canto ends with the simile of a clock chiming to wake the faithful for the service of lauds, sung at dawn, implying a monastic setting. The "bride of God" is the soul, the "Bridegroom" Christ (as in the Canticle of Canticles), but the suggestion of a convent of nuns is inescapable (and consistent with the feminine imagery of lines 79–81). Dawn songs (*aubades*) are a genre of secular love poetry (cf. lines 91–93, with note); the sexual overtones of "turge" [swells] in line 144 are strong (cf. *Purg.* 19.64–69, with note).

In the presence of a single revolving circle, the image of the mechanical clock (an innovation introduced in the thirteenth century; this is one of the earliest references to it), implying multiple wheels, is particularly striking. We are reminded that the sun was created to measure time (see the note to lines 28–30), that the "clockwise" motion of clock hands imitates that of the sun, from left to right as seen by one facing south in the northern hemisphere (its north-facing correlative, the shadow on a sundial, also moves from left to right). The souls in the circle number twelve: the number of hours of both day and night, as well as of the signs of the zodiac (and the related, originally astrological, number of the tribes of Israel—see Gen. 35.22–26 and 37.5–11—and of the Apostles).

146–47. with tempering and sweetness: *Temper* is used of musical intonation; "sweetness" refers to the emotional effect; the phrase is an example of the rhetorical figure hendiadys ["one through two"]: it is equivalent to "sweet tones."

148. where rejoicing forevers itself: In Heaven, where rejoicing is perpetual. The verb *insemprarsi* [to become perpetual], based on *sempre* [always], is one of Dante's daring neologisms, part of the elevated, Latinate style of much of the *Paradiso*.

CANTO 11

O insensata cura de' mortali,
quanto son difettivi silogismi
quei che ti fanno in basso batter l'ali!
Chi dietro a *iura* e chi ad amforismi
sen giva, e chi seguendo sacerdozio,
e chi regnar per forza o per sofismi,
e chi rubare e chi civil negozio,
chi nel diletto de la carne involto
s'affaticava, e chi si dava a l'ozio,
quando, da tutte queste cose sciolto,
con Bëatrice m'era suso in Cielo
cotanto glorïosamente accolto.
Poi che ciascuno fu tornato ne lo
punto del cerchio in che avanti s'era,
fermossi, come a candellier candelo,
e io sentï' dentro a quella lumera
che pria m'avea parlato, sorridendo
incominciar, faccendosi più mera:
"Così com' io del suo raggio resplendo,
sì, riguardando ne la luce etterna,
li tuoi pensieri onde cagioni apprendo.
Tu dubbi, e hai voler che si ricerna
in sì aperta e 'n sì distesa lingua
lo dicer mio ch' al tuo sentir si sterna,
ove dinanzi dissi: 'U' ben s'impingua,'
e là u' dissi: 'Non nacque il secondo':
e qui è uopo che ben si distingua.
La Provedenza, che governa il mondo
con quel Consiglio nel quale ogne aspetto
creato è vinto pria che vada al fondo,

CANTO 11

Sun, continued: the pilgrim's doubts—Aquinas' answers—life of saint Francis—decline of the Dominicans

O senseless care of mortals, how defective
are the syllogisms that make you ply your wings
downward!
This one was pursuing *iura*, and that one
Aphorismi, this one priesthood, these sought
to rule by force or by sophisms,
this one to steal, this one to gain public office,
this other labored immersed in the pleasure of
the flesh, and this other gave himself to idleness,
while, freed from all these things, I was with
Beatrice up in Heaven, so gloriously received.
After each had returned to the point of the
circle where he had been before, each stopped,
like a candle on a chandelier,
and I heard, within the light that had earlier
addressed me, one begin, smiling and becoming
brighter:
"Just as I reflect his ray, so, looking into the
eternal Light, I apprehend whence you derive
your thoughts.
You are puzzled, and you wish my words to
make clear, in such open and ample language
as befits your hearing,
where earlier I said: 'Where one fattens well,'
and where I said: 'The second had not been
born'; and here one must distinguish well.
The Providence that governs the world by
that Counsel in which every created sight is
vanquished before it touches bottom,

però che andasse ver' lo suo diletto
la sposa di colui ch' ad alte grida
disposò lei col sangue benedetto,
in sé sicura e anche a lui più fida,
due principi ordinò in suo favore
che quinci e quindi le fosser per guida.
L'un fu tutto serafico in ardore,
l'altro per sapïenza in terra fue
di cherubica luce uno splendore.
De l'un dirò, però che d'amendue
si dice l'un pregiando, qual ch'om prende,
perch' ad un fine fur l'opere sue.
Intra Tupino e l'acqua che discende
del colle eletto dal beato Ubaldo,
fertile costa d'alto monte pende
onde Perugia sente freddo e caldo
da Porta Sole, e di rietro le piange
per grave giogo Nocera con Gualdo.
Di questa costa, là dov' ella frange
più sua rattezza, nacque al mondo un sole,
come fa questo talvolta di Gange.
Però chi d'esso loco fa parole
non dica Ascesi, ché direbbe corto,
ma Orïente, se proprio dir vuole.
Non era ancor molto lontano da l'orto
ch' el cominciò a far sentir la terra
de la sua gran virtute alcun conforto,
che per tal donna giovinetto in guerra
del padre corse a cui, come a la morte,
la porta del piacer nessun diserra,
e dinanzi a la sua spirital corte
et coram patre le si fece unito;
poscia di dì in dì l'amò più forte.
Questa, privata del primo marito,
millecent' anni e più dispetta e scura
fino a costui si stette sanza invito,
né valse udir che la trovò sicura
con Amiclate, al suon de la sua voce,
colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura,

so that the bride of him who with piercing
cries wedded her with his blessed blood, might
go toward her delight
secure in herself and also more faithful to
him, ordained two princes to protect her, to act
as her guides on this side and on that.
One was all seraphic in his love, the other in
wisdom was a splendor of cherubic light
on earth.
I will tell of one of them, because we speak of
both when praising one, whichever we take, for
their works were toward one same end.
Between Tupino and the stream that
descends from the hill chosen by the blessed
Ubaldo, there slopes the fertile side of a high mountain
from which Perugia feels the cold and heat at
Porta Sole, and behind it the heavy mountain
yoke makes Nocera and Gualdo weep.
From this slope, where it most breaks its
steepness, was born to the world a sun, as this
one is born at times from Ganges.
But let him who speaks of this place not say
Assisi, for he would come short, but Sunrise, if
he wishes to speak properly.
He was not yet far from his rising when he
began to make the earth feel strengthened by
his great power,
when, still a youth, he had to do battle with
his father for a lady to whom, as if she were
death, no one unlocks the gate of pleasure,
and before the bishop's court *et coram patre*
he wedded her; after that from day to day his
love for her grew stronger.
This lady, deprived of her first husband, had
waited, scorned and obscure, without a suitor
eleven hundred years and more until this man appeared,
nor had it availed that he who terrified the
whole world with his voice had found her fearless
with Amyclas,

né valse esser costante né feroce
sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso,
ella con Cristo pianse in su la croce.
Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiuso,
Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti
prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso.
La lor concordia e i lor lieti sembianti,
amore e maraviglia e dolce sguardo
facieno esser cagion di pensier santi,
tanto che 'l venerabile Bernardo
si scalzò prima, e dietro a tanta pace
corse, e correndo li parve esser tardo.
Oh ignota ricchezza! oh ben ferace!
Scalzasi Egidio, scalzasi Silvestro
dietro a lo sposo, sì la sposa piace.
Indi sen va quel padre e quel maestro
con la sua donna e con quella famiglia
che già legava l'umile capestro.
Né li gravò viltà di cuor le ciglia
per esser fi' di Pietro Bernardone
né per parer dispetto a maraviglia,
ma regalmente sua dura intenzione
ad Innocenzio aperse e da lui ebbe
primo sigillo a sua religïone.
Poi che la gente poverella crebbe
dietro a costui, la cui mirabil vita
meglio in gloria del Ciel si canterebbe,
di seconda corona redimita
fu per Onorio da l'Etterno Spiro
la santa voglia d'esto archimandrita.
E poi che, per la sete del martiro,
ne la presenza del Soldan superba
predicò Cristo e li altri che 'l seguiro,
e per trovare a conversione acerba
troppo la gente, e per non stare indarno,
redissi al frutto de l'italica erba,
nel crudo sasso intra Tevero e Arno
da Cristo prese l'ultimo sigillo,
che le sue membra due anni portarno.

70 nor had it availed to have been constant and
fierce in her love, so that, when Mary stayed
below, she wept with Christ upon the Cross.
73 But that I may proceed not too obscurely,
take Francis and Poverty for these two lovers
now in my extended speech.
76 Love and admiration and joyful glances
caused their harmony and their cheerful look to
be the occasion of holy thoughts,
79 so that the venerable Bernard was first in
taking off his shoes, and ran after such great
peace, and, running, thought himself slow.
82 Oh unknown riches! oh fertile good! Egidio
goes barefoot, Silvestro, too, following the
bridegroom, so pleasing is the bride.
85 So he goes on, that father, that master, with
his lady and that family already girt with the
humble rope.
88 Nor did any cowardice of heart weigh down
his brow for being the son of Pietro Bernardone
nor for appearing wondrously base,
91 but regally he set forth his harsh intention to
Innocent and from him had a first seal to
his order.
94 When the flock of poor folk grew behind him,
whose wondrous life would be better sung in the
glory of Heaven,
97 the Eternal Spirit, through Honorius, crowned
for a second time the holy will of this archshepherd.
100 And when, in his thirst for martyrdom, in the
proud presence of the Sultan he preached
Christ and those who followed him,
103 and, because he found the people too unripe
for conversion, and so as not to stay in vain,
returned to the fruitful Italian plantings,
106 on the bare rock between Tiber and Arno
from Christ he then took the last seal, which his
limbs bore for two years.

Quando a colui ch' a tanto ben sortillo
piacque di trarlo suso a la mercede
ch' el meritò nel suo farsi pusillo,
a' frati suoi, sì com' a giuste rede,
raccomandò la donna sua più cara,
e comandò che l'amasssero a fede;
e del suo grembo l'anima preclara
mover si volle, tornando al suo regno,
e al suo corpo non volle altra bara.
Pensa oramai qual fu colui che degno
collega fu a mantener la barca
di Pietro in alto mar per dritto segno:
e questo fu il nostro patrïarca;
per che qual segue lui com' el comanda,
discerner puoi che buone merce carca.
Ma 'l suo pecuglio di nova vivanda
è fatto ghiotto, sì ch' esser non puote
che per diversi salti non si spanda;
e quanto le sue pecore remote
e vagabunde più da esso vanno,
più tornano a l'ovil di latte vòte.
Ben son di quelle che temono 'l danno
e stringonsi al pastor, ma son sì poche
che le cappe fornisce poco panno.
Or, se le mie parole non son fioche,
se la tua audïenza è stata attenta,
se ciò ch'è detto a la mente revoche,
in parte fia la tua voglia contenta,
perché vedrai la pianta onde si scheggia
e vedra' il corrègger che argomenta
'U' ben s'impingua, se non si vaneggia.'"

When it pleased the One who allotted him
such good to draw him up to the reward he
merited in making himself weak,
to his brothers, as to lawful heirs, he
commended his dearest lady, and commanded
them to love her faithfully;
and from her bosom his glorious soul chose
to set forth, returning to its kingdom, and for his
body he wished no other bier.
Think now what he was, who was a worthy
colleague to steer Peter's ship on the deep sea
by a true star:
and this was our patriarch; thus you can
discern that whoever follows him as he
commands is laden with worthy merchandise.
But his flock has become greedy for new
foods, so that it must spread itself over divers
mountain pastures,
and the farther his roaming sheep wander
from him, the more they return empty of milk to
the sheepfold.
To be sure, there are those who fear the
harm and gather close around the shepherd,
but they are so few that their hoods require but little cloth.
Now, if my words have not been hoarse, and
if your listening has been attentive, if you
remember what has been said,
your wish will be in part fulfilled, because you
will see the plant from which they splinter off,
and you will see the remedy suggested by
'where one fattens well, if one does not wander.'"

NOTES

1–12. O senseless care of mortals . . . so gloriously received: The singing of the teachers stirs the pilgrim to compare his reception in Heaven (cf. 23.16–18, 19–21 and notes) to vain pursuits. The apostrophe echoes the opening of Persius's first satire ("O cares of men, O what emptiness in things!"), and recalls the address of the proud (see *Purg.* 10.121–26 and note).

1–3. How defective . . . your wings downward: Echoing mention of Siger's syllogisms (10.138), Dante sees vain activity as arising from faulty reasoning that checks the mind's movement to its goal (cf. *Purg.* 10.121–26). For a similar turn from faulty arguments to disaster, see *Inf.* 26.125 and note.

4–9. This one was pursuing . . . to idleness: Nine activities in a descending hierarchy, which negatively expresses the variousness imposed by the heavens (see 10.1–12 and notes). If pursued for gain, jurisprudence [*iura*], medicine [*amforismi*] (after the Arabic title of Hippocrates's textbook), and the priesthood (lucrative for popular preachers, and because of the policies of the Avignon papacy; cf. 29.115–26), pervert the life of contemplation (cf. *Conv.* 3.11.10). The next four distort the active life by seizing rule through force, fraudulent sophisms (cf. *Inf.* 27.74–75 and note), thievish practices like usury, or by seeking elected office for the sake of graft (cf. *Inferno* 21–22). The last two are indulgence in pleasure and idleness. For the variousness of human activity, see 8.115–26, 118–20 and notes.

10–12. while freed . . . so gloriously received: The commentators cite *Consol.* 1.pr.3.14: "But from above, safe from their angry confusion, we can laugh at them as they snatch off those worthless things." Beatrice guides the pilgrim's intellectual ascent, as Lady Philosophy that of Boethius (see Additional Note 1).

13–42. After each had returned . . . one same end: When the wheel of the teachers stops, Thomas takes up the first of the remarks left unexplained in the previous canto (10.96; quoted in line 139); the other, expressed at 10.114, will be taken up in Canto 13 (91–111). Like Lady Philosophy, who appeals to first principles in explaining how Providence steers nature and human affairs toward the best outcome (see *Consol.* 3.pr.9, 4.pr.6, and Beatrice at 1.100–126 and 2.64, with notes; also *Mon.* 2.6.4–9), Thomas speaks of the corruption of his order by disclosing the divine plan for reforming the Church through two

saints (here "princes")—Francis, not named until line 74, and Dominic, discussed in the next canto. For their cooperation toward the same end, compare 12.31–36 and note.

13–15. After each . . . on a chandelier: Precise movement might again suggest clockworks, as in 10.139–48. In Dante's angelology the heaven of the sun corresponds to the Dominations, who contemplate the relation of Christ, the second Person, to the Holy Spirit (see *Conv.* 2.5.7–11; and see 13.52–97 and note).

25–27. where earlier I said . . . one must distinguish well: Thomas resolves the question at 10.96 by making explicit what is implicit, and the question at 10.114 with a distinction, which reconciles contradictory statements by adjusting the import of each. The Latinism *ricerna* [re-sift] in line 22 implies a distinction; it rhymes with *sterna* [roll out flat] in line 24, a term akin to *explicit* [unfolded]. The two methods suit the "intellectual" Dominicans and "affective" Franciscans respectively. See 13.34–35 and note.

28–42. The Providence . . . toward one same end: In a rhetorical chiasmus, the Dominican Thomas praises Francis, founder of a rival order, while the Franciscan Bonaventura will praise Dominic, founder of the Order of Friars Preacher, or Dominicans; each criticizes his own order, however. Dante reflects the custom by which a member of each order praised the founder of the other on his feast day.

31–33. in order that the bride . . . toward her delight: The bride is the Church, espoused to Christ through his sacrifice on the Cross. See Matt. 27.50: "When he had cried out with a loud voice [*clamavit voce magna*], yielded up the ghost" (cf. 15.133, *Purg.* 23.73–75, 30.11 and notes). The nuptial metaphor marking Francis's lifelong imitation of Christ derives from the Canticle of Canticles, in which the "beloved" [*dilectus*] is a metaphor for Christ (see Canticle of Canticles 2.3, 2.8, etc., and *Purg.* 29.108–14; and see Bonaventura's biography of Francis, *Legenda maior*, 9.1, 10.1). Dante followed the attribution of Canticles to Solomon explicit in the work's Vulgate title (*Canticum canticorum Salomonis*), and Solomon is one of the teachers in the sun (10.112–14), as well as the subject of discussion in 13.91–96 (see note): which helps explain why the nuptial metaphor permeates the cantos in the sun (10.139–48, 12.43) and recurs in *Paradiso* (27.40, 31.3, 32.128); see Introduction, p. 8–9, and Additional Note 4.

34–36. secure in herself . . . on this side and on that: The security of the Church might mean her protection from heresy by the Dominicans, and "faithfulness"

the imitation of Christ's life that Francis promoted; yet Dominic espouses faith (see 12.61–63 and note), while freedom from worldly cares (one meaning of *securitas*) was promoted by Franciscans in their Rule of 1221 (Chapter 8); the relation of the founders cuts both ways (see note to lines 40–42).

That the two princes guide "on this side and on that" echoes a prophecy, based on Daniel 12.5 and Apoc. 11.3, and inserted into a work by Joachim of Fiore (see 12.139–40 and note), regarding two champions of the Church: "There shall be two men, one here, the other there . . . one Italian, one Spanish" [*erunt duo viri, unus hinc, alius inde . . . unus italus, alter hispanus*]. The passage likely influenced the choice of east and west at 49–51 and 12.46–51, and implies defense of the flanks of the Church, as if a chariot or ship (cf. 12.28–30, 106–8; *Purg*. 32.116–17 and note).

37–39. One was all seraphic . . . cherubic light on earth: Identification of two founders with angelic orders may derive from Ubertino da Casale: "The first [Francis], purged with the seraphic coal and inflamed with heavenly ardor, was seen to fire the whole world. The second [Dominic], truly a cherub outstretched and extending the light of wisdom, radiated more brightly over the darkness of the world, fecund in the word of his preaching" (Ubertino 1961, 421ab). Francis's relation to the seraphim is announced at the beginning of the *Legenda* (see preface, 1, 13.3; see also lines 52–54 and 106–8, with notes).

43–117. Between Tupino . . . no other bier: Five terzinas introduce the twenty-five that contain Thomas's eulogy of Francis. After periphrases marking Francis's place of birth (lines 43–48), his life is narrated in figurative terms, first as a rising Sun (49–57), and as a marriage with Poverty (58–75, also 31–33, 112–17) that excites others to follow him and form an order (76–87), soon officially approved (88–99). Francis's expedition in quest of martyrdom (100–105) prepares the account of his stigmata (wounds in the hands, feet, and side) and death (106–17).

Francis was born in 1182 to Pica Bourlement and Pietro Bernardone, a wool-merchant in the Umbrian town of Assisi, and christened Giovanni (Francis was added subsequently, perhaps by his father). Pleasure-loving as a youth, Francis aspired to bear arms, but after illness kept him from joining a military expedition to Apulia, he acted on the scriptural admonition to sell all his possessions, give to the poor, and take up the cross (Matt. 10.9–10, 19.21, 16.24, respectively). In 1209 his rule for his Friars Minor ("minor" echoes Matt. 25.45; see *Legenda* 6.5) received verbal sanction from Pope Innocent III, followed by confirmation of a "sealed rule" in 1223 by Pope Honorius III. After Francis's return from Egypt in 1219 he founded a tertiary order of penitents, open to

men and women (1223), a parallel order of nuns having been established before 1221 by his friend Chiara [Clare] Scifi (see 3.97–102 and note). Late in 1224 Francis was witnessed bearing the stigmata; he died near Assisi on 4 October 1226, now his feast day, and was canonized in 1228 by Pope Gregory IX (see Additional Note 5).

After line 75, Dante largely adheres to the official biography, the *Legenda maior* by Bonaventura, minister general of the order (other versions were ordered destroyed). Bonaventura strove to mediate between the lax (or Conventual) and rigorist (or Spiritual) positions regarding poverty that finally divided the order (by 1318 a number of Spirituals had been condemned and burned; see 12.124 and note). Dante also draws on sources more insistent in advocating poverty, such as the *Arbor vitae crucifixae Iesu* of Ubertino da Casale (see 12.124–26 and note), which includes material from the anonymous *Sacrum Commercium sancti Francisci cum domina Paupertate*.

43–54. Between Tupino . . . if he wishes to speak properly: The geographic surroundings of Assisi are outlined (see map, p. 187): the streams Chiascio and Topino, that flow respectively south from Mount Ubaldo and west past the southern end of Mount Subasio to join each other and then flow into the Tiber (see lines 106–8); the massif of Subasio, stretching north-south, which during summer reflects heat, and cold in winter because of snows, on Perugia to the west; and the gentler slope, east of Assisi, from which Francis is said to have risen at his birth.

The passage mentions the sun three times and prepares a key theme of the biography: Francis rises like the sun in bringing light, vigor, and heat (that is, love) to the earth; but Francis is himself an effect of the sun, both because it is the "father of all mortal life" (see 22.116); and as a symbol of God's Providence trained on the earth below (see 1.40–42 and note; *Conv*. 3.12.7–8).

44. the blessed Ubaldo: Ubaldo began as a hermit on the mountain that later bore his name. After attempting to establish a religious order, he was made bishop of Gubbio, and intervened in 1148 to save the city from destruction by Frederick Barbarossa, the Holy Roman emperor. He is a forerunner of Francis, as the hermit John the Baptist was a forerunner of Christ (see 12.58–59 and note, and *Legenda*, preface, 1)

49–51. From this slope . . . at times from Ganges: Francis is a figurative sun, while the pilgrim finds himself within the planetary sun that rises "at times" from Ganges; that is, at the spring equinox (cf. *Purg*. 2.1–6 and note), when it is most vigorous (see 12.54 and note). Mention of the sun while the pilgrim is within it has its rhetorical equivalent in the fact that the figurative language of

the biographies is itself fostered by solar virtue. See Chapter 6 of Durling/Martinez 1990.

52–54. But let him who speaks . . . to speak properly: Francis is here named after Christ, who rises like a sun, "oriens ex alto" [the rising from on high] (Luke 1.78). In the preface to the *Legenda*, Francis is seen "under the image of an angel coming up from the rising of the sun [*ab ortu solis*] with the seal of the living God" (cf. Apoc. 7.2). See also Malachi 4.2, "The sun of justice shall arise" [*orietur vobis . . . sol iustitiae*] and 3.1, "Behold I send my angel" [*ecce ego mitto angelum meum*], texts featured in advent and nativity liturgies. Francis's imitation of the advent Christ is a staple of the biographies (*Legenda*, preface, 1; *Sacrum commercium*, 1.12, 2.16–17), and related to his role in the *Legenda* as herald of the second Advent, the Last Judgment (see Emmerson and Herzman 1992). See Additional Notes 4 and 6.

53. not say Assisi, for he would come short: The medieval spelling *Ascesi* means "I have risen," and evokes both Christ's ascent of the Cross (a key Franciscan theme) and his Resurrection; but the similar name of *Oriente* [rising place] evokes the cosmic Christ as the rising sun (see previous note). Dante's focus on Francis's name echoes Zacharaias 6.12: "Behold a man, the Orient is his name" [*Ecce vir Oriens nomen eius*], a prophecy of the reconstruction of the Temple, interpreted to mean that Francis would help rebuild the Church.

55–75. He was not yet far . . . my extended speech: Thomas passes from solar metaphor to Francis's love for Lady Poverty, the dominant motive of his life. "Do battle" in line 58 reflects how Francis, who had wanted to serve as a soldier, is presented in the biographies as a knight engaged in service to Christ or to his beloved lady, Poverty (*Legenda* 1.3, 13.9–10; *Sacrum commercium* 1.9; and see 12.31–45 and notes). Thomas's prolixity (*parlar diffuso*) suggests rhetorical elaboration, not his usual terse dialectical style: cf. lines 25–27 and note.

58–62. when still a youth . . . *et coram patre* [in front of the father] **he wedded her:** The *Legenda* (2.4) relates how, after a quarrel about money Francis had taken from his father for charitable works, Francis publicly returned his father's property, and stripped naked (or to a loincloth) in front of his father and the bishop of Assisi. The Latin phrase in line 61 can refer to Pietro Bernardone or to the bishop, or, echoing Matt. 10.33, to the "father in heaven" to whom Francis shifts his allegiance (cf. *Purg.* 11.1–24, 4–6 and notes). A spandrel in the lower church in the basilica in Assisi, painted between 1308 and 1334, depicts a homely *sancta Paupertas* [saint Poverty] married to Francis, with Christ officiating (see *Legenda* 14.4 and figure 7).

Figure 7. The Wedding of Saint Francis and Poverty

60. no one unlocks the gate of pleasure: Poverty is as unwelcome as death. For assent as a door closed or opened by the will, see *Purg.* 18.61–63. As the biographies speak of Francis's willing physical embrace [*amplexus*)] of Poverty (*Sacrum commercium* 1.13, *Legenda* 7.6), with Solomon's Canticle of Canticles in the background, the expression "gate of pleasure" is, metaphorically, erotic (see Auerbach 1959).

64–75. This lady . . . my extended speech: The shunning of Lady Poverty, from the nudity of Adam through the Crucifixion to Francis's day, is detailed in the *Sacrum commercium* and in Ubertino's *Arbor vitae*; more briefly in the *Legenda* (7.1–2). "Scorned" comes from Is. 53.3 [*despectum*], describing the "man of sorrows"—in Christian exegesis, Christ (*Legenda* 1.6); see 7.28–30 and note. The loathing of poverty was a topic of vernacular literature (see *RR* 10111–10234 and the Tuscan lyric poets Monte Andrea and Cecco Angiolieri; see Chapter 5 of Steinberg 2007)

64–72. This lady . . . Christ upon the Cross: This scene is in the *Arbor vitae*, not the *Legenda*. Mary's desire to join Christ on the Cross was a topic of the *planctus Mariae*, a trope in the passion liturgy (cf. *Purg.* 33.4–7 and note).

67–68. fearless with Amyclas: In Lucan's *Pharsalia* (5.504–59, recalled in *Conv.* 4.13.10–12), Caesar, seeking passage across the sea to Italy, knocks on the door of the fisherman Amyclas, whose hut is unbarred, as he is poor [*pauper*] and fears no robbers. The Gospels attest that fishermen were dear to Christ; they also figure in Franciscan biography (*Sacrum commercium* 2.20). Lucan's episode from the Roman civil war is presented by Dante as preparatory of Christian values; the emperor Trajan exemplifies humility with Mary and David in *Purg.* 10.64–78 (see notes); Fabritius is "a great man in his poverty" at *Mon.* 2.5.11; Caesar's preparation of the world for Christ is narrated in *Par.* 6.61–81 (see notes).

73–75. But that I may proceed . . . in my extended speech: The revelation of Francis's name and the identity of the lovers is the center of Thomas's speech.

76–84. Love and admiration . . . so pleasing is the bride: The sight of Francis and Poverty excites others to pursue her. They cast off their shoes like Francis, imitating both Gospel prescription (cf. Luke 22.35 and *Legenda*, 3.1, 4.7) and the first biography of Francis by Thomas of Celano (in Habig 1973; 1.10.24: "Bernard . . . ran eagerly after the saint of God).

79–83. so that the venerable Bernard . . . Silvestro too: In mentioning Bernard, Egidio, and Silvestro in order, Dante follows Bonaventura (*Legenda* 3.3–5). Bernard of Quintavalle was Francis's first disciple. A wealthy merchant of Assisi, he sold all his goods and gave to the poor; in Bologna, he founded the first Franciscan convent (1211). The humble, uneducated Egidio was subject to ecstatic visions. He wrote a book on Francis entitled *Verba aurea* and died in 1262. As a priest, Silvestro haggled with Francis over the price of stone for building a church; shamed by Francis's generosity, he became a disciple. He died ca. 1240.

82. Oh unknown riches oh fertile good: That poverty is truly wealth was an axiom of Francis's teaching (see *Legenda* 4.7, 7.1), based on the Gospel parables of the treasure hidden in a field and the pearl of great price for which one ought to give all one has (Matt. 13.44–46, cited in *Legenda* 6.4, 7.1, 11.14). Mineo 1992 points out the echo of Lucan's episode of Amyclas (*Phar.* 5.527–29), translated by Dante in *Conv.* 4.13.12: "Oh as yet scantly understood riches [*richezze*] of the gods!"

85–93. So he goes on . . . first seal to his order: Innocent III, the thirteenth-century pope who reinvigorated the papacy, though troubled by the austerity of Francis's proposed rule, granted verbal approval in 1209.

87. already girt with the humble rope: Francis was said to have adopted the rope belt [*capestro*; *corda*] because of Matt.10.9–10—hence "corded friars" (*Legenda* 3.1). Along with the coarse brown habit, the rope soon identified the order (cf. *Inf.* 27.91–93, and *Inf.* 16.106–14 and notes; see also 15.100–102 and note).

88–90. Nor did any cowardice . . . wondrously base: Francis's father, Pietro, was a merchant, thus socially second-class (cf. *Legenda* 6.1); Francis himself consorted with lepers and beggars (*Legenda* 1.5–6). "Base" [*dispetto*] echoes its use for Poverty (line 65, "scorned"), further binding the spouses.

91–93. but regally . . . first seal to his order: See *Legenda* 7.7, on poverty: "This is the royal dignity which our Lord Jesus assumed when for our sake he became poor, that he might make us rich through his poverty." Francis's regal status (see "princes," line 35), arising from his abasement, echoes the exaltation of Christ through his humility, by which his name is exalted in Heaven and earth (cf. Philippians 2. 5–11, cited in the biographies, e.g. *Sacrum commercium*, 1.21); see 7.118–20, 19.100–111 and notes, and Additional Note 4.

94–99. When the flock . . . this archsheperd: Derived from Greek, *archimandrita* is used of Pope Clement V in Dante's *Ep.* 11.13 (see also *Mon.* 3.11.17, where it describes Peter). Dante's mention of official approval of the rule underscores Francis's obedience to authority alongside his love of poverty; Mineo 1992 suggests that Dante scores a polemical point in having the Holy Spirit move Honorius to approve the Rule, placing it beyond revision by subsequent popes.

100–108. And when in his thirst . . . bore for two years: The last part of Thomas's eulogy links Francis's expedition to Sultan Melek-el-Khamil (1217–38) in Damietta, Egypt, during the Fourth Crusade—out of sequence here, as it occurred in 1219, before Honorius's approval of the *regula bullata* [sealed rule] in 1223—to the stigmata of 1224. Following *Legenda* 9.9, the miracle compensates for Francis's frustrated quest for martyrdom.

101–2. in the proud presence . . . those who followed him: Francis supposedly risked his life in preaching to the sultan, but he was received courteously, heard out, and allowed to leave unharmed. That the episode seems suited more to Dominic than Francis argues for the similarity of the founders (cf.

12.31–36 and note); it also testifies to Francis as a "knight" of Christ [*miles Christi*]; see *Legenda* 1.3, 2.8, 9.7, 13.10, etc.), and exemplifies the parallel often drawn between Franciscans and crusaders as those who take up the cross and follow Christ (see Derbes 1996).

106–108. on the bare rock . . . bore for two years: *Legenda* 13.3 and other biographies relate how the stigmata were impressed on Francis at La Verna in the Tuscan Appenines, on or near the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (Sept. 14). Key terms in Dante's account ("seal," "limbs," "bore") spring from the biographies, but Dante omits the vision of the Seraph with "an image of a man crucified in the midst of the wings," nor does he mention the wounds described in the *Legenda*.

107. from Christ he then took the last seal: After the first (line 93) and second seals (lines 97–98), the third seal is pressed directly into Francis's flesh. See *Legenda* 4.11: "Francis had the stigmata of our lord Jesus Christ impressed in him with the finger of the living God, as if the sealed bull of Christ, the supreme pontiff, for the confirmation of the rule in every way and the commendation of its author." For the idea of "sealing" with the image of Christ, see 2 Cor. 1.22.

109–17. When the One . . . no other bier: As Providence sent Francis to be born, God will raise up his soul and complete the circle of his life. The rivers of the birthplace (line 43) are echoed in the Tiber and Arno (line 106) framing La Verna.

110–11. the reward he merited in making himself weak: "Weak" [*pusillo*] was used by Francis of his flock ("pusillus grex"), and is like expressions Francis used of himself ("small and least [*minimus*] servant," related to the term *frater minor* [lesser friar]; see note to lines 43–117), versions of which Dante also used of himself (*Ep.* 11.9): "I am one of the least [*minima*] of the sheep in Christ's pasture."

112–14. to his brothers . . . to love her faithfully: Mineo 1993 observes that "heirs" and "command" refer to Francis's testament, in which he forbids lax interpretations of his Rule; defense of its rigor became crucial to the Spirituals.

115–17: and from her bosom . . . no other bier: Two years after receiving the stigmata, Francis died at the small church of the Porziuncola, near Assisi, after asking to be placed on the ground (*Legenda* 14.3; see also 3.5, 5.1). He rises to Heaven from the same earth from which he rose as a sun (see lines 49–57). Dante drew on the ascensions of both Christ and Francis for the death of Beatrice (Cf. *Legenda* 14.6, *VN* 23.7)

An implicit model for Francis's life is Ps. 18.5–7, used liturgically to signify the descent, birth, manifestation, and return to Heaven of the Word (Advent, Nativity, Epiphany, Ascension, respectively). The Psalm includes solar and nuptial imagery (18.5–6: "He hath set his tabernacle in the sun . . . as a bridegroom [*sponsus*] coming out of his bride chamber"), understood as referring to the Incarnation. Francis's return to his kingdom echoes Ps. 18.7: "His going out is from the end of heaven [*a summo caelo*] and his circuit even to the end thereof [*ad summum eius*]." The psalm was well known to Dante (cf. *Conv.* 2.5.12 and *Ep.* 5.2–6; see also 7.30–33 and note). There is also a link here to Dominic's life (cf. 12.76–78 and note).

118–39. Think now . . . if one does not wander: Francis's standard applies equally to the founder of the Dominicans; therefore the corruption of one group (line 139, said of contemporary Dominicans) is as lamentable as that of the other (Franciscan decline is lamented in the next canto). Auerbach 1959 observes that Thomas uses ninety lines of biography to explain one-half line of text.

118–32. Think now . . . but little cloth: Thomas clarifies his remark (reiterated as line 139), describing the founder of his own order, Dominic, first as co-helmsman of the ship of the Church (118–20; see *Purg.* 32.116–17 and note, *Ep.* 6.3), then as the flagship of a fleet of cargo vessels (his followers, 121–23; cf. *Purg.* 26.73–75 and note). Thomas then returns to the metaphor of fraternal discipline as sheep grazing, reproaching those who wander after novel, inferior nourishment, so that they return to the sheepfold empty of milk (124–29). Similar metaphors were adopted for Francis's leadership of his friars (*Legenda* 4.5, 8.3, 9.6) so the parallelism of the lives is maintained this way as well; see also 12.142–45 and note.

131–32. so few that their hoods require but little cloth: An abrupt shift from metaphor (the good friars as sheep who keep near the shepherd) to fact (all friars wore hoods; cf. the "jovial friars" at *Inf.* 23.61–63, and cf. 22.76–78 and note).

133–39. Now, if my words . . . if one does not wander: If the value of the main stem is grasped, then deviance from it is correspondingly lamentable; the same goes for straying from the pastures of good fraternal discipline; thus the language of 10.94, repeated as line 139, is justified. For the metaphors, see note to lines 49–51.

CANTO 12

Sì tosto come l'ultima parola
la benedetta fiamma per dir tolse,
a rotar cominciò la santa mola,
e nel suo giro tutta non si volse
prima ch' un'altra di cerchio la chiuse,
e moto a moto e canto a canto colse,
canto che tanto vince nostre muse,
nostre serene, in quelle dolci tube,
quanto primo splendor quel che refuse.
Come si volgon per tenera nube
due archi paralleli e concolori,
quando Iunone a sua ancella iube,
nascendo di quel d'entro quel di fori
a guisa del parlar di quella vaga
ch' amor consunse come sol vapori,
e fanno qui la gente esser presaga,
per lo patto che Dio con Noè puose,
del mondo che già mai più non s'allaga:
così di quelle sempiterne rose
volgiensi circa noi le due ghirlande,
e sì l'estrema a l'intima rispuose.
Poi che 'l tripudio e l'altra festa grande,
sì del cantare e sì del fiammeggiarsi
luce con luce gaudïose e blande,
insieme a punto e a voler quetarsi,
pur come li occhi ch' al piacer che i move
conviene insieme chiudere e levarsi,
del cor de l'una de le luci nove
si mosse voce che l'ago a la stella
parer mi fece, in volgermi al suo *dove*,

CANTO 12

Sun, continued: second circle of theologians, saint Bonaventura—life of saint Domini—decline of the Franciscans—the second circle named

As soon as the blessed flame finished speaking
the last word, the holy millstone began to turn,
and it had not completed the circle before
another enclosed it and took motion from its
motion and song from its song,
song that in those sweet pipes surpasses our
muses, our sirens, as much as a first shining
surpasses its reflection.
As through a tenuous cloud two arcs curve
parallel and colored alike, when Juno commands
her handmaid,
the outer born from the inner one, like the
speech of that desirous nymph whom love
consumed as the sun does vapors,
and cause people here to predict the
weather, thanks to the pact God made with
Noah, that the world will never again be flooded:
so the two garlands of those sempiternal
roses turned about us, and so the outer replied
to the inner one.
After the solemn dance and the great
rejoicing, both of the singing and of the flaming
of light with light, joyous and affectionate,
ceased all together in one instant and with
one will, like eyes which by the pleasure that
moves them must always be closed or lifted together,
from the heart of one of the new lights there
came a voice, which made me seem a needle
to the pole star, as I turned to its *where*,

e cominciò: "L'amor che mi fa bella
mi tragge a ragionar de l'altro duca
per cui del mio ben sì ben ci si favella:
degno è che dov' è l'un, l'altro s'induca,
sì che, com' elli ad una militaro,
così la gloria loro insieme luca.
L'essercito di Cristo, che sì caro
costò a rïarmar, dietro a la 'nsegna
si movea tardo, sospeccioso e raro,
quando lo 'mperador che sempre regna
provide a la milizia, ch'era in forse,
per sola grazia, non per esser degna,
e, come è detto, a sua sposa soccorse
con due campioni, al cui fare, al cui dire
lo popol disvïato si raccorse.
In quella parte ove surge ad aprire
Zefiro dolce le novelle fronde
di che si vede Europa rivestire,
non molto lungi al percuoter de l'onde
dietro a le quali, per la lunga foga,
lo sol talvolta ad ogne uom si nasconde,
siede la fortunata Calaroga
sotto la protezion del grande scudo
in che soggiace il leone e soggioga:
dentro vi nacque l'amoroso drudo
de la fede cristiana, il santo atleta
benigno a' suoi e a' nemici crudo,
e come fu creata, fu repleta
sì la sua mente di viva virtute
che ne la madre lei fece profeta.
Poi che le sponsalizie fuor compiute
al sacro fonte intra lui e la Fede,
u' si dotar di mutüa salute,
la donna che per lui l'assenso diede
vide nel sonno il mirabile frutto
ch'uscir dovea di lui e de le rede,
e perché fosse qual era in costrutto,
quinci si mosse spirito a nomarlo
del possessivo di cui era tutto.

and it began: "The love that makes me
beautiful draws me to speak of the other leader,
because of whom my own has been so praised here:
fitting is it that, where the one is, the other be
brought in, so that, as they went to war together,
so their glory may shine as one.
The army of Christ, which cost so much to
rearm, was marching behind the standard, slow,
fearful, and scattered,
when the Emperor who rules forever provided
for his endangered army by grace alone, not
because they were worthy,
and, as has been said, he sent to the aid of
his bride two champions, by whose deeds and
words the straying people were brought to themselves.
In that region where sweet Zephyr rises to
open the new leaves with which we see Europe
clothed again,
not far from the striking of the waves behind
which, in its long flight, the sun each day
disappears from view,
sits fortunate Calaruega, under the protection
of the great shield on which the lion is subjected
and subjects:
therein was born the amorous lover of the
Christian faith, the holy athlete, benign toward
his own but harsh to his enemies,
and, as soon as it was created, his mind was
so filled with lively power that, still in his mother,
it made her a prophet.
When the betrothal was completed at the
holy font between him and Faith, where they
endowed each other with mutual health,
the lady who gave consent for him saw in her
sleep the marvelous fruit that was to be born of
him and of his heirs,
and so that he might be in name what he was
in deed, a spirit moved from here to name him
with the possessive of him to whom he belonged.

Domenico fu detto, e io ne parlo
sì come de l'agricola che Cristo
elesse a l'orto suo per aiutarlo.
Ben parve messo e famigliar di Cristo,
ché 'l primo amor che 'n lui fu manifesto
fu al primo consiglio che diè Cristo.
Spesse fiate fu tacito e desto
trovato in terra da la sua nutrice,
come dicesse: 'Io son venuto a questo.'
Oh padre suo veramente Felice!
oh madre sua veramente Giovanna,
se interpretata val come si dice!
Non per lo mondo, per cui mo s'affanna
di retro ad Ostïense e a Taddeo,
ma per amor de la verace manna
in picciol tempo gran dottor si feo,
tal che si mise a circüir la vigna,
che tosto imbianca se 'l vignaio è reo.
E a la sedia che fu già benigna
più a' poveri giusti—non per lei
ma per colui che siede, che traligna—
non dispensare o due o tre per sei,
non la fortuna di prima vacante,
non *decimas, quae sunt pauperum Dei*
addimandò, ma contro al mondo errante
licenza di combatter per lo seme
del qual ti fascian ventiquattro piante.
Poi, con dottrina e con volere insieme,
con l'officio appostolico si mosse,
quasi torrente ch'alta vene preme,
e ne li sterpi eretici percosse
l'impeto suo, più vivamente quivi
dove le resistenze eran più grosse.
Da lui si fecer poi diversi rivi
onde l'orto catolico si riga
sì che i suoi arbuscelli stan più vivi.
Se tal fu l'una rota de la biga
in che la Santa Chiesa si difese
e vinse in campo la sua civil briga,

70 *Dominicus* he was called, and I say he was
the husbandman whom Christ chose to help
him in his vineyard.
73 Surely he seemed the messenger and familiar
of Christ, for the first love that became manifest
in him was to the first counsel that Christ gave.
76 Often was he found by his nurse silent but
awake upon the ground, as if to say: 'I have
come for this.'
79 O his father truly Felix!. O truly Johanna his
mother, if one truly speaks the interpreted meaning!
82 Not for the world, for whose sake they labor
now, following the man from Ostia and Taddeo,
but for love of the true manna,
85 in short time he became a great teacher, so
that he took to tending the vine that quickly
withers if the vinekeeper is lazy.
88 And from the See that was formerly more
benign toward the just poor—not because of the
throne but because of him who sits there,
who is degenerate—
91 he asked, not to pay out two or three for six,
not the income of the first vacancy, not *decimas*,
quae sunt pauperum Dei,
94 but permission to fight against the errors of
the world, to defend the seeds that bore the
twenty-four plants that now surround you.
97 Then, with doctrine and with a will, by
apostolic license he went forth like a torrent fed
by a deep spring,
100 and his attack struck the thickets of heresy
most strongly where the resistance was greatest.
103 From him are derived various streams that
water the Catholic vineyard, so that its vines
stand more vigorous.
106 If such was one wheel of the chariot in which
Holy Church defended itself and vanquished in
the field its civil strife,

ben ti dovrebbe assai esser palese
l'eccellenza de l'altra, di cui Tomma
dinanzi al mio venir fu sì cortese.
Ma l'orbita che fé la parte somma
di sua circunferenza è derelitta,
sì ch' è la muffa dov' era la gromma.
La sua famiglia, che si mosse dritta
coi piedi a le sue orme, è tanto volta
che quel dinanzi a quel di retro gitta,
e tosto si vedrà de la ricolta
de la mala coltura, quando il loglio
si lagnerà che l'arca li sia tolta.
Ben dico: chi cercasse a foglio a foglio
nostro volume, ancor troveria carta
u' leggerebbe: 'I' mi son quel ch' i' soglio,'
ma non fia da Casal né d'Acquasparta,
là onde vegnon tali a la scrittura
ch' uno la fugge e altro la coarta.
Io son la vita di Bonaventura
da Bagnoreggio, che ne' grandi offici
sempre pospuosi la sinistra cura.
Illuminato e Augustin son quici,
che fuor de' primi scalzi poverelli
che nel capestro a Dio si fero amici.
Ugo da San Vitto re è qui con elli,
e Pietro Mangiadore e Pietro Spano,
lo qual giù luce in dodici libelli,
Natàn profeta e 'l metropolitano
Crisostomo e Anselmo, e quel Donato
ch' a la prim' arte degnò porre mano.
Rabano è qui, e lucemi dallato
il calavrese abate Giovacchino,
di spirito profetico dotato.
Ad inveggiar cotanto paladino
mi mosse l'infiammata cortesia
di fra Tommaso e 'l discreto latino,
e mosse meco questa compagnia."

the excellence of the other one should be
clear to you, about whom, before my coming,
Thomas was so courteous.
But the track made by its outer circumference
has been abandoned, so that there is mold
where the crust was.
His troop, who marched straight while their
feet followed his footprints, has so turned about
that the one in front throws seed contrary to the one behind,
and soon it will be seen by the harvest of their
poor farming, when the tares will complain that
the granary is closed to them.
I say indeed: whoever should search page by
page through our volume would find leaves
where he would read 'I am still as I was,'
but it will not be one from Casale or from
Acquasparta, whence they come to the
Scripture so disposed that one flees it and the
other narrows it.
I am the life of Bonaventura of Bagnoreggio,
who in my great duties always subordinated the
left-hand cares.
Illuminato and Agostino are here, who were
among the first barefoot paupers to become
friends with God by wearing the rope.
Hugh of Saint Victor is here with them, and
Petrus Comestor and Peter of Spain, who
shines down there in twelve volumes,
Nathan the prophet and Chrysostom the
metropolitan, and Anselm, and that Donatus
who deigned to put his hand to the first art.
Rhabanus is here, and at my side shines the
Calabrian abbot Joachim, endowed with prophetic spirit.
To praise so great a paladin I was moved by
the fiery courtesy of brother Thomas and his
judicious words,
and all this company was moved with me."

NOTES

1–45. As soon as . . . brought to themselves: Thomas finishes, and the circle of preachers turns; it is then enclosed by a second circle of souls, which matches song and movement to the first; when both stop, a light and voice emerge from the new circle to praise the founder of the Dominican order.

1–6. As soon as . . . and song from its song: Using an image found in Alfraganus and Ristoro d'Arezzo (*Composizione del mondo*, 1.23; see *Conv*. 3.5.14), Dante compares the nearly flat diurnal course of the sun as seen from the poles to a circular millstone, which turns horizontally over a stone fixed underneath it.

7–9. Song that in those sweet pipes . . . surpasses its reflection: Explaining the music of the spheres and the sun's role in moderating it (*Comm*. 2.3.1), Macrobius reports Plato's notion that "a singing Siren sits upon each of the spheres" (*Republic* 10.617b–c), and connects the idea to that of nine Muses distributed in the heavens: Dante's wheeling teachers fulfill and transcend the myth.

10–21. As through a tenuous cloud . . . to the inner one: The two circles appear as a double rainbow, identified first with pagan references, then with an episode of Christian sacred history. Juno's handmaid and messenger is Iris, the rainbow (Ovid, *Met*. 1.270–71); the nymph is Echo, the daughter of air and earth; rejected by Narcissus, she withered away to a voice incapable of initiating speech (*Met*. 3.339–510; cf. 3.16–18, 121–123 and notes).

The second circle mirrors the first because the first is primary, as the intellect is primary, followed by the will (see Additional Note 3). The double rainbow, with the second inverting the sequence of colors of the first, is also an image of how the two cantos reflect each other chiastically. Announced by the celestial crossing that suggests the Greek letter χ, described in 10.7–21, the chiastic structure is most discernible in the fact that Thomas's list of preachers (10.91–138) precedes his eulogy of Francis (11.43–117, while Bonaventura's list (12.127–145) follows his praise of Dominic (12.45–105). In both cases, the invectives against the degraded orders follow the eulogies (Thomas's at 11.124–38, Bonaventura's at 12.112–26).

16–18. and cause people here . . . will never again be flooded: The advent of the reformers, like that of Christ, renews the covenant God made with man

after the Flood (Gen. 9.9–15, esp. 13, 15): "I will set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of a covenant between me, and between the earth . . . there shall no more be waters of a flood to destroy all flesh." The *Legenda* of Francis (preface, 1) presents his coming as "like the rainbow that lights up the clouds with sudden glory [Ecclus. 50.8], bearing in himself the sign of God's covenant, bringing the good news of peace and salvation to man." The praise delivered in this canto will in many ways echo Thomas's of Francis in the previous one, as if a second rainbow; poetic form manifests a renewed covenant between God and man. Parallels between the two cantos are indicated in the notes below.

22–36. After the solemn dance . . . may shine as one: These lines parallel 11.13–42, preparing the eulogy of Francis. The language marks the militant activity of this founder (cf. lines 32, 35, 37–39, 41, 44). The Bull of Gregory IX canonizing Dominic refers to the two orders as "legions of the Friars Preachers and Friars Minor, with the generals he [God] had selected to lead them together in battle" (see the discussion of Gregory IX in Lehner 1964).

22–27. After the solemn dance . . . lifted together: The cosmic motions illustrated in the working of the body, the microcosm: in addition to the parallel blinking of the eyes/circles, that the organs of sight (associated with intellection) are moved by pleasure (affecting the will) embodies a cooperation of the two circles (Cf. 2.142–44 and note; see Additional Note 6). Reflects 11.13–18.

28–30. from the heart . . . as I turned to its *where*: The pilgrim is a compass needle to the polestar of the next speaker, Bonaventura, in life the minister general of the Franciscans, thus their guide (that the pilgrim turns to a voice rather than a light echoes 11.16–18). Mention of the recently invented compass, an image also found in contemporary lyric poetry, evokes Dominic's guidance of the ship of the Church (11.118–21); see also note to lines 37–39, 106–11.

31–45. and it began . . . brought to themselves: Five terzinas of preparation by Bonaventura for his biography of Dominic, parallel to 11.28–42, also five terzinas.

31–36. and it began . . . their glory may shine as one: Love moves Bonaventura to match the praise spoken by Thomas, while Thomas is moved by the logical conclusion that Francis and Dominic worked to the same end (cf. 11.40–42)

34. fitting it is that . . . the other be brought in: The phrase for reciprocity (in Italian, "l'un l'altro"; cf. *Purg.* 6.73–75), revises earlier instances where it

signified rivalry; cf. *Inf*. 25.121–23, 32.126; and esp. *Purg*. 11.97–99 (rival poets) and 16.109–11 (papacy and empire) and notes. Significant tension did exist between the orders: although Bonaventura himself was moderate and was influenced by Aquinas, Alexander of Hales and other Franciscans bitterly attacked Thomas's views (see Wéber 1974). Thomas criticized Franciscan positions on the primacy of will and apostolic poverty and was skeptical of the stigmata (Mineo 1992). This passage parallels 11.37–38.

37–39. The army of Christ . . . fearful and scattered: The high cost was Christ's sacrifice (cf. Acts 20.28, 1 Cor. 6.20, and *Par.* 11. 31–33); or, as some commentators claim, that of the Apostles (see 27.40–45, and *Ep.* 11.2, "They consecrated with their blood" [*sanguine consecrarunt*]). The "standard" is the cross, the battle standard [*vexillum*] of the faith (cf. *Inf*. 34.1 and note). The Church is slow for lack of zeal; fearful because it is assailed by heresy; scattered because it lacks strong popes.

43–45. and as has been said . . . brought to themselves: This parallels 11.31–33 on the espousal of Francis and poverty, as Bonaventura acknowledges. "Deeds" and "words" refer to the preaching and activity the orders fostered; both founders and orders combined the active with the contemplative life. That the orders collaborate to restore the Church is found in Gregory's Bull of Canonization, and also in the chapter on Dominic in the *Golden Legend*, in which he embraces Francis.

46–105. In that region . . . stand more vigorous: Bonaventura relates in twenty terzinas the life of Dominic, parallel to Thomas's life of Francis (11.43–117). The geography of the birthplace (lines 46–57) is followed by testimonies to the saint's virtue, his marriage to faith, and dedication to poverty (58–81); then his pursuit of reform (82–87), the approval of his order (88–96), and defense of the Church against heresy (97–102); finally the growth of the order (103–5).

Domingo Guzmán was born in Calaruega, Old Castile, between 1170 and 1175, possibly of a noble family. After theological studies at the University of Palencia, he became in 1195 a canon of the cathedral of Osma, whose bishop he accompanied on diplomatic missions to Rome, and eventually to Languedoc to preach against the Albigensian heresy. With the support of Folquet, bishop of Toulouse (see note to 9.37–42) Dominic founded the *Ordo praedicatorum* [Order of Preachers], recognized by Pope Honorius in 1216. From its first center in Bologna, the order spread over all Europe. Dominic died on 4 August 1221 (his feast day) and is buried in Nicola Pisano's marble tomb in Bologna in the church bearing his name. He was canonized by Gregory IX in 1234.

Dominic's biography by Humbert of Romans (1245), which included materials compiled earlier by Jordan of Saxony, circulated widely with Dominican liturgical books. The Dominican James of Voragine's entry on Dominic in the *Golden Legend* (Chapter 113; written ca. 1285), if supplemented with the Bull of Canonization by Gregory IX (1234), includes virtually all of what Dante reports about Dominic.

46–57. In that region . . . harsh to his enemies: Parallel to 11.43–54, locating the birthplace of Dominic in Spain, emphasizing the west and sunset rather than the east, so that the two founders anchor eastern and western cardinal directions.

46–48. In that region . . . Europe clothed again: In poetic tradition the amorous embrace of the earth by Zephyr, the west wind of spring, yields flowers and vegetation (Ovid, *Met*. 1.63–64, 107–8). The imagery of renewal tempers Dominic's association with the west, usually connected in the medieval imagination with nightfall, death, and judgment. Parallel to 11.46–48.

49–51. not far from the striking . . . disappears from view: Parallel with 11.49–51, and sharing the identical word *talvolta* [at some time] in the same line 51. For an observer in Italy at the summer solstice (June 13), the Atlantic Ocean (or Gulf of Gascony), west of Spain, is where the sun would seem to set after its long journey [*lunga foga*] across the sky, although the autumnal equinox (September 13) is also a conceivable date. Reference to the sun's course is consistent with 10.1–12 (esp. the use of "striking," as in line 100 and 10.9; see notes).

52–54. sits fortunate Calaruega . . . subjected and subjects: "Fortunate" because when Dominic was born, Castile was ruled by the good King Alfonso VIII (see *Conv*. 4.11.14). After 1230 Dominic's birthplace was part of the unified kingdom of Castile and Leon, which in its arms quartered the lions of Leon and towers of Castile, so that one lion stood above, one below. Parallel to 11.48.

55–56. therein was born . . . the holy athlete: Dante's account of Dominic as a lover of the faith (using the word *drudo* [lover]; cf. *Purg*. 32.155, *Conv*. 2.15.4) is not found in his biographies (but see next note). The Bull of Canonization calls Dominic an "athlete"; borrowed from Greek, the word suggests a strong competitor; Catholic liturgy applies it to soldiers of Christ.

58–69. and as soon as it was created . . . to whom he belonged: Dominic's birth, like Francis's, is fostered by the heavens, especially the sun. The anecdotes in these verses are in the lives of Dominic and in the *Golden Legend*, but

the marriage to faith at baptism is derived from Francis's espousal of Poverty (11.58–63), and Dominic's nurture by a mother, a godmother, and a bride, Faith, mirrors Francis's treatment of Poverty as mother, bride, and lady-love (*Legenda* 7.6).

58–60. and as soon as it was created . . . made her a prophet: The saint's mother dreamt that she gave birth to a dog with a torch in his mouth that set the world afire (cf. 9.28–30 and note). The dream is a prophecy of her son's name as *domini canis*, "the Lord's dog," because *Dominicus* is a possessive form [belonging to the Lord], but the image also prophesied the order itself, the *Dominicani* [those belonging to Dominic]. The dream is both a rebus and a multiple pun.

58–59. his mind was so filled: "Filled" [*repleta*] is a Latinism pointing to John the Baptist (Luke 1.15): "And he shall be filled [*replebitur*] with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb." Francis, whose baptismal name was John, is associated with John the Baptist in the *Legenda* (preface, 1, and 5.2; cf. 32.31–36 and note).

61–69. When the betrothal . . . to whom he belonged: Dominic's baptism is a marriage with Faith requiring pledges of mutual support. In some biographies, Dominic's godmother, who confirms that the child wishes baptism, sees a star on the child's forehead (cf. *Legenda*, preface, 1, comparing Francis to the morning star, Lucifer), but no source has the godmother furnish the etymology of Dominic's name, or foretell the fruits of his labors. Dante seems to adapt Joseph's dream of the sheaves of grain and of the stars and moon worshiping the sun in Gen. 37.6–10.

67–69. and so that he might be in name . . . to whom he belonged: The interpretation of names, frequent in Dante (cf. *VN* 2.1, 13.4, 24.4; *Purg.* 13.109–11 and note), is prominent in Bonaventura's biography (cf. also lines 79–81); the *Golden Legend* begins the chapter on Dominic with etymologies of his name.

70–75. *Dominicus* [belonging to the Lord] **he was called . . . the first counsel Christ gave:** Dominic is named at the center of the biography (parallel to 11.73–75), and his roles as husbandman of the Church and devotee of poverty declared.

71,73,75. Christ. The name of Christ is registered in triple rhyme with itself, for the first time in the poem (there are three further instances: cf. 14.104–8, 19.104–8, 32.83–87 and notes there). Christ is the root of the counsel of poverty and owner of the vineyard of which Dominic is custodian; the saint's name was also understood in the *Golden Legend* as "guardian of the Lord's vineyard" (one of the ways in which Dominic was *Domini custos*, a "guardian of

the Lord"). The triple rhyme reiterates Dominic's possession *by* his lord, as his name *Dominicus* indicates: as his husbandman [*agricola*, lines 71–72]; as his "messenger" and "familiar" (line 73) and in his adherence to Christ's precept (lines 72–73).

71–72. the husbandman whom Christ . . . in his vineyard: The motif of the vineyard (cf. lines 86–87, 100, 104–105) rests on scripture (Ps. 79.9–16, Is. 5.1–8, Canticle of Canticles 2.15, John 15.1–8, Matt. 20.1–2; cf. *Ep.* 5.16, 7.21). The Bull of Canonization of Dominic also begins by stating Christ's devotion to the Church: "He does not abandon the vine which he transplanted from Egypt" (Ps. 79.9), "even to the very consummation of the world" (Matt. 28.20).

73–75. Surely he seemed the messenger . . . first counsel that Christ gave: Like Francis, Dominic conceived of his order as poor. The first evangelical counsel of

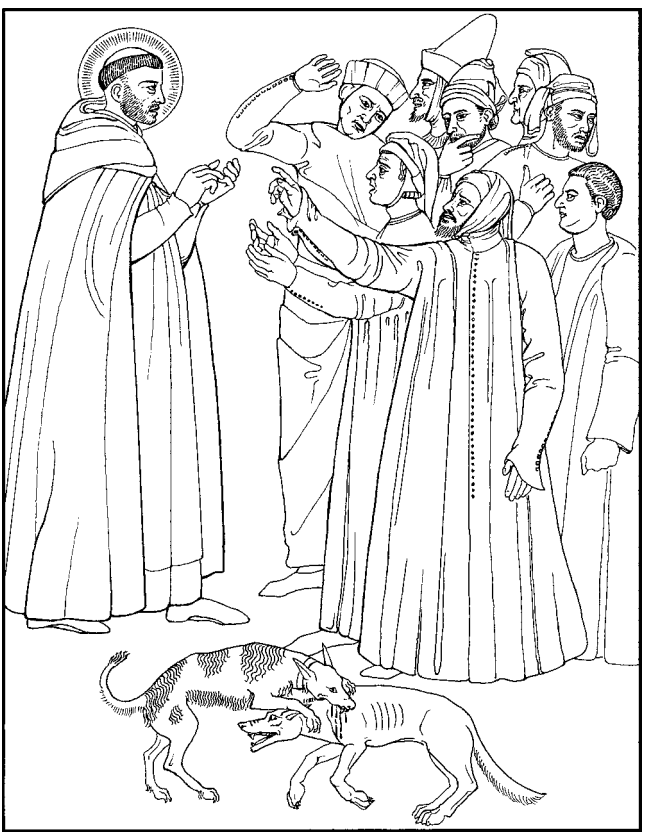

Figure 8. Saint Dominic teaching to Jews, Arabs and Heretics

perfection is usually taken to be poverty (the others are chastity and obedience), after Matt. 19.21: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor": this was also the first Bible text to guide Francis (*Legenda* 3.3, 7.3).

76–78. Often he was found . . . I have come for this: This widely cited detail (cf. *Golden Legend*) emphasizes Dominic's humility, parallel to Francis's own preference for the ground (*Legenda* 5.1, 14.3; see 11.115–17 and note). Dominic's remark echoes Christ's reference to his preaching mission (Mark 1.38): "For this is why I have come" [*ad hoc enim veni*], but also Francis's words when he discovers his love of Poverty, "This is what I want" [*hoc enim cupio*], *Legenda* 3.1.

79–81. O his father truly Felix . . . the interpreted meaning: The name of Dominic's father means "happy" in Latin; his mother's name, after the Hebrew Johanna, means "the grace of God" (Brunetto Latini, *Trésor* 1.65.2). In *VN* 24.4, Dante explains the name of Guido Cavalcanti's supposed lady, Giovanna, by referring to John the Baptist. The etymologies parallel 11.73–75.

82–87. Not for the world . . . if the vine keeper is lazy: Anticipating later criticisms in line 82, Bonaventura contrasts prosperous glossators on canon law like Hostiensis (cf. 5.19–63, 9.134–36 and notes), and the Florentine physician Taddeo Alderotto (cf. *Conv*. 1.10.10), with the theological teaching at which Dominic and his order excelled. Parallel to 11.1–12; cf. 11.4 and note.

84. the true manna: The food that Wisdom affords; cf. *Conv.* 1.1.5–15; *Purg.* 21.1–3; *Par*. 1.68, 2.10–12 and notes; for its Old Testament meaning, see *Purg.* 11.13–15 and note.

88–96. And from the See . . . now surround you: This passage, which parallels 11.85–99, describes the order's purpose and Dominic's petition for papal sanction.

88–90. And from the See . . . who is degenerate: The poor are neglected by Boniface VIII, pope during the pilgrim's journey, and perhaps by John XXII, reigning in Avignon during the writing of *Paradiso* (see 18.130, 27.58 and notes).

91–93. he asked not to pay out . . . *decimas quae sunt pauperum Dei* [the tenths that belong to the poor ones of God]: Typical ecclesiastical abuses: limiting distributions of Church income intended for poor relief, competing for the first available ecclesiastical benefice (which brought a steady income), and diverting to private use tithes for the poor (cf. *Mon*. 2.10.1–3). Compare Solomon's request, discussed at 13.94–102, with notes; see also Additional Note 2.

94. against the errors of the world: Bonaventura evokes the title of Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles*, directed against the "false" beliefs of Jews, Muslims, and "pagans." Dante adapted the title for his poem against philosophical errors regarding nobility [*Contra-li-erranti*]; see *Conv*. 4.30.3.

95–96. to defend the seeds . . . that now surround you: See John 15.1–8 and *DVE* 1.8.1. Dominic's defense of the church fructifies as garlands (later, starry crowns) of preachers circling Beatrice and the pilgrim. The image echoes the twenty-four elders of the Church around the lamb, Christ (Apoc. 4.4; see *Purg.* 29.16–30, 83–84 and notes, and Additional Note 14). Francis wrote his first Rule and sought approval of his order when he had twelve followers (*Legenda* 3.7).

97–105. Then with doctrine . . . stand more vigorous: For "torrent," see Is. 59.19: "When he shall come as a violent river [*fluvius violentus*], which the Spirit of the Lord driveth on." The uprooting of heretical "thickets" by torrents of water suggests Dominic's weapon was preaching, not the sword. Once moderated, Dominic's torrent irrigates the vine of the Church.

100. and his attack struck the thickets of heresy: See the Bull of Canonization: "Not only had the brambles and thorns of vice invaded the vineyard . . . the little foxes were seeking to change it into the bitterness of a strange vine (Canticle of Canticles 2.15)."

106–45. If such was one wheel . . . was moved with me: The second part of Bonaventura's speech attacks the corruption of the Franciscans (lines 112–26; parallels 11.124–39), and names twelve teachers in the second, external circle revolving around the pilgrim and Beatrice (lines 127–41; parallels 10.94–138).

106–23. If such was one wheel . . . I am still as I was: The order is described first as a chariot and troop (112–17), then in terms of good and bad harvests (118–20), then as a book (121–23). In lines 114 and 117 an agricultural frame of reference is superimposed on the image of the chariot wheel (the good crust in wine barrels, deposited by a well-harvested wine, has become the bad mold of a spoiled wine, the result of a bad harvest) and on the reversed direction of march (interfering with the act of sowing); the book image is also linked to the agricultural terms, since the word for the granary that stores the harvest [*arca*] also describes chests for storing books. The piling on of figurative language reflects Bonaventura's righteous wrath. For sowing and harvest metaphors in *Paradiso*, see 22.151 and note.

106–11. If such was one wheel . . . was so courteous: In Gregory's Bull of Canonization, Franciscans and Dominicans are said to come as a chariot with

legions in aid of the Church. The Church itself is a chariot or ark in *Purgatorio* (see *Purg*. 29.115–20; 32.16–27, 48–51, 95, 116–17 and notes; and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 15), though here the orders make up the two-horse battle chariot [*biga*, line 106] that defends the Church.

112–14. But the track . . . where the crust was: Francis's successors deviate from his path. Compare Dante's account of the Church misguided by prelates at *Ep*. 11.5 ("neglecting to steer the car of the Church along the track clearly indicated [*manifestam orbitam*] by the Crucified"), based on the phrase Phaethon's father, the sun, uses to describe the correct path (the ecliptic) through the heavens (Ovid, *Met*. 2.133, "You will clearly see the traces of the wheel" [*manifesta rotae vestigia cernes*]; see Additional Note 7). The solar Francis (11.49–51) is still implicit; that Francis followed Christ's footprints, that is, his example, is in *Legenda* 9.1; see also Bonaventura, *Itinerarium* 2.1, 7, 10, 11; and cf. *Mon*. 1.8.2.

115–17. His troop who marched straight . . . to the one behind: The reversed direction of march means the seed (Francis's message) is cast under the feet of those who come behind, causing confusion (cf. Matt. 13.3–30, esp. 24–30). For implications of reversed motion, cf. *DVE* 1.1.1, *Conv*. 1.7.4, *Par*. 8.94–96.

118–20. and soon it will be seen . . . is closed to them: Images of judgment: the good harvest is stored in the granary, the tares or cockles burned (Matt. 13.30). Whether Dante means a particular group, such as the Spirituals condemned in 1318, is disputed. Cf. 19.106–11 and note.

121–23. I say indeed . . . I am still as I was: The order is a book, each individual a page. For the metaphor, see lines 134–35 and 33.85–90 and note.

124. but it will not be one from Casale nor from Acquasparta: Dante refers to the extremes of the Franciscan spectrum: the Spiritual Ubertino da Casale (1259–after 1329), and the Conventual Matthew of Acquasparta (1240–1302). As a young man Ubertino, after joining the Franciscans in 1273, studied in Florence under Peter John Olivi (1285–89). Ubertino taught theology at Paris (1289–90) before returning to Italy to lead the Spirituals. Ordered in 1305 to La Verna in the Casentino (where Francis had received the stigmata; see 11.100–108 and note), Ubertino composed the *Arbor vitae crucifixae Iesu*, a work known to Dante that set forth the Spiritual ideal through meditation on the Crucifixion. Later Ubertino clashed with the Church; he declared all papal elections after that of Celestine V invalid (see *Inf*. 3.59–60 and note), and left the order in 1317 when John XXII was elected pope. Ubertino was condemned for heresy in 1325.

Matthew of Acquasparta, a disciple of Bonaventura, taught at Paris, Bologna, and Rome, and became minister general of the order (1287–91). As a cardinal he was twice papal legate to Florence: seeking support for Boniface VIII against the Colonna in 1297 (see *Inf.* 27.85–93, 102 and notes), and in 1300 when appointed pacifier of a divided Florence; instead he fostered the coup by Charles of Valois in favor of the Black Guelphs (Compagni, *Cronica* 1.21; see *Inf.* 6.64–72).

126. narrows it: Mineo 1993 argues that the force of Dante's term [*coarta*] (cf. *Mon.* 3.8.5, *Ep.* 7.11) is not that Ubertino imposed a rigorist reading of Francis's teaching (not necessarily only of the Rule), but that he raised poverty above humility and obedience (hence Dante's corrective references at 11.85–87, 91–99, 113), and at the expense of study, preaching, and conventual life (that is, residence in monasteries, rather than living as a wandering friar; cf. 22.88–89 and note).

127–41. I am the life of Bonaventura . . . prophetic spirit: Bonaventura identifies the teachers of the second circle in five terzinas: one to himself; one to two early followers of Francis, the *poverelli*; one to three scholars; and one to an Old Testament prophet, a Greek churchman, a Latin theologian, and a grammarian (the most varied group); the last terzina is shared by an encyclopedist and a prophet. No individual dominates; the humble and inspired outnumber methodical scholars: the first two, the humblest, are nearest to Bonaventura.

Because this group is placed in the sun, it must be equally "wise," though through means other than systematic study. Francis, deprecating his own intellectual achievements, acquired wisdom by memorizing scripture (*Legenda* 11.1). That one of the group "shines" on earth in the twelve books of his work (see line 135) suggests one way heavenly wisdom is transmitted to earth.

127–29. I am the life of Bonaventura . . . the left-hand cares: Dominic's eulogist was born Giovanni da Fidenza at Bagnoregio near Viterbo in 1221, the year of Dominic's death. Bonaventura, reportedly acquired his name when Francis cured him of a disease and exclaimed "bona ventura" [good fortune], studied at Paris under the Franciscan Alexander of Hales, and later taught theology there, where he also met Aquinas. After becoming minister general in 1257, he spent much of his tenure mediating between the Spirituals and Conventuals (see note to line 124). His administration substantially preserved for the order the devotion to poverty Francis had desired, though the Spirituals were not placated. Bonaventura died in Lyons in 1274, the same year as

Aquinas. In addition to his *Life of Francis*, which shapes Francis's example in the same moderate direction (11.43–117 and note), Bonaventura's best-known works are the *Breviloquium* and the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* [*The Mind's Journey to God*], a likely influence on the *Paradiso*.

129. subordinated the left-hand cares: Adapting Prov. 3.16, this phrase refers to practical everyday matters, including administration, as opposed to worship, contemplation, and pastoral care. Francis stated the preference in his Rule ("I entreat all brothers . . . that they avoid all hindrances and place care and preoccupation behind them" [*postposita*, cf. *pospuosi*]); see *Legenda* 14.5.

130–32. Illuminato and Agostino . . . wearing the rope: Dividing a whole terzina between them, these early followers of Francis, distinguished for their humility, are, along with the final pair, the most strongly emphasized. Their names reflect the Franciscan debt to Augustine's teaching, and reliance on direct illumination, rather than ratiocination. Born blind, Illuminato ("a true son of light," according to the *Legenda*) received his sight from Francis, accompanied Francis on his preaching mission to Egypt, and witnessed the stigmata. Agostino was especially remembered because he died on the same day as Francis (*Legenda* 14.6). For the more celebrated Augustine of Hippo, see 32.34–36 and note.

133. Hugh of St. Victor . . . in twelve volumes: Hugh of St. Victor (1097–ca. 1141), from 1120 a regular canon of St. Victor, held the chair of theology from 1130 until his death in 1141. He and his disciple Richard (cf. 10.131–32) represent the approach to learning inspired by Augustine (the canonry of St. Victor observed the Augustinian Rule). Hugh was known for his *Didascalicon*, an introduction to philosophy and theology. Peter Comestor [the Eater], so named for his vast reading, born at Troyes, was a priest and eventually dean of its cathedral; he joined St. Victor, where by 1164 he was a canon, and taught at the University of Paris, of which he became chancellor. When he died (before 1185) he left his possessions to the poor. In his *Historia scholastica*, he narrates sacred history from Adam to Paul (see 26.139–42 and note). Peter of Spain (1225–76) was born in Lisbon, studied at Paris, and was archbishop of Braga by 1273; the next year he became cardinal bishop of Tusculum (modern Frascati). Elected pope in Viterbo in 1276 as John XXI, he died within the year. His *Summulae logicales*, a manual that commented on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*, were consulted by Dante for *Monarchia*. His papal rank is not mentioned. See Additional Note 2.

136–38: Nathan the prophet . . . put his hand to the first art: Nathan rebuked David for his adultery with Bathsheba (see 32.10–12 and note) and anointed

Solomon king (3 Kings 1.34; see 13.91–96 and note); the "oracle of Nathan" (2 Kings 8.7–17), often thought the first messianic prophecy in the Old Testament (see Sarolli 1971), foretold that the house of David would rule "sempiternally." John Chrysostom, metropolitan patriarch of Constantinople (d. 407, in exile from the court of the emperor Arcadius), the only representative from the Greek Church in Bonaventura's list, was famous as a preacher (his surname means "golden-mouthed"). Anselm of Aosta (1033–1109), drawn by the fame of Lanfranc, became a monk at the Benedictine abbey of Bec in Normandy; he became its abbot in 1078, and was made archbishop of Canterbury in 1093. His treatise *Cur deus homo* used rational arguments to justify the Incarnation (see 7.19–48 and notes). Aelius Donatus, the fourth-century rhetorician who might have tutored Jerome, wrote a Latin grammar, briefer than Priscian's (see *Inf*. 15.109 and note). Grammar is called the "first art" because it is the basis for the other arts in the *trivium* (rhetoric and logic); Donatus "deigns" because grammar is the humblest art.

139–41. Rhabanus is here . . . endowed with prophetic spirit: Next is the encyclopedist Rhabanus Maurus, a Benedictine who became abbot of Fulda in 822 and was afterwards appointed archbishop of Mainz (847); he died in 856. Last is Joachim of Fiore or Flora (1130–1202), born near Cosenza in Calabria. After a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he joined the Cistercians and became abbot, but in 1189 he founded a monastery in the remote Sila region of the Abruzzi. After the Rule of Fiore was approved by Celestine III in 1196, it became the mother house of the order of San Giovanni in Fiore. In his writings Joachim divided sacred history into three ages: the first, under the rule of the Father; the second, that of the visible Church, ruled by the Son; and a third, dawning age to be ruled by the Holy Spirit, when evangelical purity would prevail. Highly influential during the thirteenth century, Joachim criticized both Church and empire. His name, signed to imitations of his works by the Spirituals, authorized attacks on the papacy with which Dante seems to have largely agreed (see Manselli 1982).

141. endowed with prophetic spirit: Joachim's prophetic gift was noted in his feast-day liturgy at his home abbey of Flora; its mention here "seals" Dante's approval of Joachim's prophecy of renewal. Note the additional emphasis on prophecy (see line 136; Francis, too, was credited with a prophetic spirit [*Legenda* 11.3, 12.1]). As a sometimes controversial visionary, Joachim is the counterpart of the once embattled dialectician Sigier (10.133–38 and note), also last in his group. Dante includes among his teachers two who ventured to the limits of orthodoxy.

142. To praise so great a paladin: Referring to Dominic, the subject of Bonaventura's eulogy. Note the echo of 10.137–38 (see note). The paladins (counts of the palace [*palatium*] where the emperor held court) were in early epics the especially valiant retainers of Charlemagne; the expression continues the idea of Francis and Dominic as defenders of Lady Church (*Legenda* 1.3, 9.7, 13.10).

143–44: the fiery courtesy . . . and his judicious words: Bonaventura attributes to Thomas "fiery" courtesy (like seraphic love, associated with Francis; see 11.37–39 and note) and the "judicious words" of the mind—gifts typical of both orders.

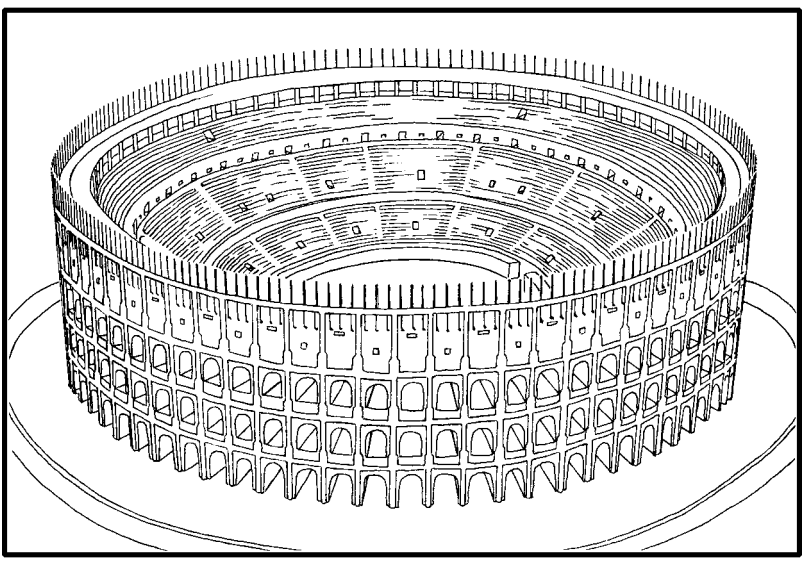

Figure 9. The Coliseum in Rome

CANTO 13

Imagini, chi bene intender cupe
quel ch' i' or vidi (e ritegna l'image,
mentre ch' io dico, come ferma rupe),
quindici stelle che 'n diverse plage
lo cielo avvivan di tanto sereno
che soperchia de l'aere ogne compage:
imagini quel Carro a cu' il seno
basta del nostro cielo e notte e giorno,
sì ch' al volger del temo non vien meno,
imagini la bocca di quel corno
che si cominicia in punta de lo stelo
a cui la prima rota va dintorno,
aver fatto di sé due segni in cielo
qual fece la figliuola di Minoi,
allora che sentì di morte il gelo,
e l'un ne l'altro aver li raggi suoi,
e amendue girarsi per maniera
che l'uno andasse al prima e l'altro al poi:
e avrà quasi l'ombra de la vera
costellazione e de la doppia danza
che circulava il punto dov' io era,
poi ch'è tanto di là da nostra usanza,
quanto di là dal mover de la Chiana
si move il ciel che tutti li altri avanza.
Lì si cantò, non Bacco, non Peana,
ma tre Persone in divina natura
e in una Persona essa e l'umana.
Compié 'l cantare e 'l volger sua misura,
e attesersi a noi quei santi lumi,
felicitando sé di cura in cura.

CANTO 13

Sun, continued: dance—the pilgrim's second doubt—only Adam and Christ created directly—Solomon's wisdom—against hasty judgment

Let whoever wishes to grasp well what I now
saw, imagine (and hold well the image, as I
speak, like an immoveable rock)
fifteen stars that in the various quarters of the
sky shine with a clarity that overcomes every
density of the air:
imagine that Wain for which the bosom of our
sky suffices both night and day, never too narrow
for the turning of the shaft,
imagine the mouth of the horn that begins at
the point of the axis on which the first rotation turns,
and that all these had made two figures in the
sky like the one made by the daughter of Minos
when she felt the chill of death,
and let one have its rays in the other, both
revolving in such a way that one begins and the
other follows:
and he will have almost the shadow of the true
constellation and the double dance that was
circling about the point where I was,
for it is beyond our experience as far as
beyond the motion of the Chiana moves the
heaven that surpasses all the others.
There they sang not Bacchus, not Paean, but
three Persons in the divine nature, and in one
Person the divine and the human.
The singing and the turning filled out their
measure, and those holy lights turned to us,
happy to have care succeed care.

Ruppe 'l silenzio ne' concordi numi
poscia la luce in che mirabil vita
del poverel di Dio narrata fumi,
e disse: "Quando l'una paglia è trita,
quando la sua semenza è già riposta,
a batter l'altra dolce amor m'invita.
Tu credi che nel petto onde la costa
si trasse per formar la bella guancia
il cui palato a tutto 'l mondo costa,
e in quel che, forato da la lancia,
e prima e poscia tanto sodisfece
che d'ogne colpa vince la bilancia,
quantunque a la natura umana lece
aver di lume, tutto fosse infuso
da quel valor che l'uno e l'altro fece:
e però miri a ciò ch'io dissi suso
quando narrai che non ebbe 'l secondo
lo ben che ne la quinta luce è chiuso.
Or apri li occhi a quel ch'io ti rispondo,
e vedrai il tuo credere e 'l mio dire
nel vero farsi come centro in tondo.
Ciò che non more e ciò che può morire
non è se non splendor di quella idea
che partorisce amando il nostro Sire,
ché quella viva Luce—che sì mea
dal suo Lucente che non si disuna
da lui, né da l'Amor ch' a lor s'intrea—
per sua bontate il suo raggiare aduna,
quasi specchiato, in nove sussistenze,
etternalmente rimandendosi una.
Quindi discende a l'ultime potenze
giù d'atto in atto, tanto divenendo
che più non fa che brevi contingenze:
e queste contingenze essere intendo
le cose generate, che produce
con seme e sanza seme il ciel, movendo.
La cera di costoro e chi la duce
non sta d'un modo, e però sotto 'l segno
idëale poi più e men traluce.

Then the silence among the concordant
deities was broken by the light in which a
wondrous life of God's pauper had been related to me,
and it said: "Now that one grain has been
threshed and its kernels stored away, sweet
love invites me to beat the other.
You believe that in the breast whence came
the rib to form the lovely cheek whose palate is
costly to all the world,
and in the one which, pierced by the lance,
once and for all so satisfied the law that it
outweighs all guilt upon the scales,
however much human nature is permitted to
receive of light was all infused by the Power that
made both:
and therefore you wonder at what I said
above when I related that there has been no
equal to the wealth enclosed in the fifth light.
Now open your eyes to my reply, and you will
see that your belief and my speech both meet in
the truth as at the center of a circle.
What does not die and what can die are
solely the shining forth of the Idea to which our
Lord gives birth in love,
for that living Light—that so streams from his
Shining that it is not dis-oned from him nor from
the Love that enthrees itself with them—
by its goodness unifies its radiance, as if
mirrored, in nine subsistences, while eternally
remaining one in itself.
Thence it descends from act to act down to
the last potencies, finally becoming such that it
makes only fleeting contingencies:
and by these contingencies I mean the things
that are generated, which the heavens produce,
with seed and without seed, by their motion.
The wax of these things, like what works it,
does not stay in one condition, and therefore
beneath the seal of the Idea it is more and less translucent.

Ond' elli avvien ch' un medesimo legno,
secondo specie, meglio e peggio frutta,
e voi nascete con diverso ingegno.
Se fosse a punto la cera dedutta,
e fosse il cielo in sua virtù suprema,
la luce del suggel parrebbe tutta,
ma la Natura la dà sempre scema,
similemente operando a l'artista
ch' a l'abito de l'arte ha man che trema.
Però se 'l caldo amor, la chiara vista
de la prima virtù dispone e segna,
tutta la perfezion quivi s'acquista.
Così fu fatta già la terra degna
di tutta l'animal perfezïone,
così fu fatta la Vergine pregna,
sì ch' io commendo la tua oppinïone
che l'umana natura mai non fue,
né fia, qual fu in quelle due persone.
Or s' i' non procedesse avanti piùe,
'Dunque, come costui fu sanza pare?'
comincierebber le parole tue,
ma perché paia ben ciò che non pare,
pensa chi era e la cagion che 'l mosse
quando fu detto: 'Chiedi,' a dimandare.
Non ho parlato sì che tu non posse
ben veder ch' el fu re che chiese senno
acciò che re sufficïente fosse,
non per sapere il numero in che enno
li motor di qua sù, o se *necesse*
con contingente mai *necesse* fenno,
non *si est dare primum motum esse*,
o se del mezzo cerchio far si puote
trïangol sì ch'un retto non avesse.
Onde, se ciò ch'io dissi e questo note,
regal prudenza è quel vedere impari
in che lo stral di mia intenzion percuote,
e se al 'surse' drizzi li occhi chiari,
vedrai aver solamente respetto
ai regi, che son molti, e ' buon son rari.

Thus it comes about that trees of the same species bear better and worse fruit, and you are born with different wits.

If the wax were prepared fully, and if the power of the heavens were at its height, the light of the seal would appear entirely,

but Nature always gives it lessened, working like the artist who has the habit of art but a hand that trembles.

Thus where the warm love and the clear sight of the first power prepare and seal, all perfection is acquired there.

Thus was dust made worthy of all the perfection brought by soul, thus was the Virgin made pregnant,

so that I commend your opinion, that human nature has never been, nor will be, what it was in those two persons.

Now if I did not proceed further, 'Then how was he without an equal?' would be the beginning of your words,

but so that what is not apparent may appear, think who he was and the cause that moved him to his request, when 'Ask' was said.

I have not spoken in such a way that you cannot see clearly that he was a king who asked for the wisdom to be a worthy king,

not in order to know the number of the Movers up here, or if *necesse* with contingent ever made *necesse*,

not *si est dare primum motum esse*, or whether in a semicircle one can make a triangle that lacks a right angle.

Thus, if you consider this and what I have said, the prudence of a king is that unequaled seeing at which the arrow of my intention strikes,

and if at my 'arose' you direct clear eyes, you will see that it refers to kings alone, who are many, but the good are rare.

Con questa distinzion prendi 'l mio detto,
e così puote star con quel che credi
del primo padre e del nostro Diletto.
E questo ti sia sempre piombo a' piedi
per farti mover lento, com' uom lasso,
e al *sì* e al *no* che tu non vedi:
ché quelli è tra li stolti bene a basso
che sanza distinzione afferma e nega
ne l'un così come ne l'altro passo,
perch' elli 'ncontra che più volte piega
l'oppinïon corrente in falsa parte,
e poi l'affetto l'intelletto lega.
Vie più che 'ndarno da riva si parte,
perché non torna tal qual e' si move,
chi pesca per lo vero e non ha l'arte.
E di ciò sono al mondo aperte prove
Parmenide, Melisso e Brisso, e molti
li quali andaro e non sapëan dove:
sì fé Sabellio e Arrio e quelli stolti
che furon come spade a le Scritture
in render torti li diritti volti.
Non sien le genti, ancor, troppo sicure
a giudicar, sì come quei che stima
le biade in campo pria che sien mature:
ch' i' ho veduto tutto 'l verno prima
lo prun mostrarsi rigido e feroce,
poscia portar la rosa in su la cima,
e legno vidi già dritto e veloce
correr lo mar per tutto suo cammino,
perire al fine a l'intrar de la foce.
Non creda donna Berta e ser Martino,
per vedere un furare, altro offerere,
vederli dentro al consiglio divino,
ché quel può surgere, e quel può cadere."

With this distinction take what I said, and thus
it can stand along with what you believe of our
first father and of our Beloved.
And let this ever be lead upon your feet, to
make you move slowly, like a weary man, to both
the *yes* and the *no* that you do not see:
for surely he is low among the fools who
affirms and denies without distinction in either case,
for it often happens that a hasty opinion turns
in a wrong direction, and then affect binds the intellect.
Whoever fishes for the truth and lacks the art
fares much worse than in vain when he leaves
the shore, for he does not return the same as before.
And open proof of this in the world are
Parmenides, Melissus, and Bryson, and many
others who set out without knowing whither:
thus did Sabellius and Arius and those fools
who were like swords to the Scriptures, reflecting
normal faces all distorted.
And let not people be too sure to judge, like
one who appraises the oats in the field before
they are ripe:
for I have seen all the previous winter long the
thornbush appear rigid and fierce, but later bear
the rose upon its tip,
and I have seen a ship run straight and swift
across the sea for all its course, only to perish at
last when entering the port.
Let not dame Bertha and messer Martin
believe, because they see one stealing, another
offering, that they see them within God's counsel,
for that one can rise up, and this one can fall."

NOTES

1–24. Let whoever wishes . . . surpasses all the others: We count this elaborate proem among the addresses to the reader (see the note to 10.4–21). To imagine the appearance and movements of the two circles of theologians, the reader is asked to think of them as made up of twenty-four of the brightest stars in the sky, moving in two circles in the manner of fixed stars (this can only be understood as coordinated motions in the same direction—not specified). Note the conspicuous repetition (in lines 1, 2, 4, and 7) of *imagine* and *image* and the explicit reference to strenuous mental effort in lines 2–3, giving unusually strong emphasis.

4–6. fifteen stars . . . density of the air: Like other introductory handbooks of astronomy, Alfragano's, which Dante knew well and repeatedly cites, gives a list of the fifteen brightest stars in the order of their ecliptical longitude. Many of them can be reliably identified: e.g., Sirius, Rigel, Betelgeuse, Regulus, Antares, and others; but not all: the fifteen brightest stars listed in modern handbooks are all brighter than +1, but Regulus is not among them, though it is conspicuous enough (+1.4).

7–9. imagine that Wain . . . turning of the shaft: The Wain is an old name for the Big Dipper, whose long shaft extends furthest south. Above 55° north latitude, the constellation never sets. In any case, the constellation furnishes seven stars visible to the naked eye, bringing the total to twenty-two.

10–12. imagine the mouth . . . first rotation turns: The "first rotation" is the diurnal turning of the celestial vault; the north celestial pole is the apparent axis of the rotation. Ursa Minor can be seen as the outline of a horn with the narrow end at the pole star, opening into a mouth, two slightly brighter stars (β UMi and γ UMi), which are now added to the total. One notes that in context, the first circle of theologians corresponds to the "first rotation."

13–21. and that all these . . . the point where I was: The constellation Corona Borealis was identified in antiquity as the crown given to Ariadne by Dionysus, who found her after she was deserted on Naxos by Theseus, and which he made into a constellation at her death (*Met.* 8.172–82). Dante thinks of the constellation as circular (as the term *corona* implies), though it is only a semicircle, and we are to imagine the two "crowns" as concentric. Since the two circles of preachers were established clearly enough at the beginning of Canto

12, the function of this proem, it would seem, is to renew and intensify the wonder of the star or sun circles. But the elaborate effort of imagination will provide only the "shadow" of the reality.

The description of the motion of the two circles looks back to 12.4–6, especially "fitting motion to motion" (cf. also 12.1–21). "Both revolving in such a way that one begins and the other follows" (lines 17–18) has sometimes been taken to indicate that the circles move in opposite directions, which we believe mistaken. In our view the second circle, composed of voluntarist thinkers, thus representing will, is shown to *follow* the motions of the inner circle, as will should follow intellect (cf. *Inf.* 1.30 and *Purg.*18.61–75, with notes); in other words, they are reconciled. For further discussion, see Additional Note 3.

22–24. for it is beyond . . . all the others: The outermost heaven (the *primum mobile*, enclosing all the others) moves the fastest, and its velocity surpasses that of the Tuscan river Chiana by as much as the pilgrim's experience in the sun surpasses all ordinary earthly experience.

25–30. There they sang . . . care succeed care: Bacchus is suggested by the mention of Ariadne's crown; Paean is one of the titles of Apollo: both were shown by Macrobius in *Sat.* 1.17–23, along with other gods, to be aspects of the one true (pagan) god, the sun. The song here is the Christian praise of the Trinity, the true God, and especially of its second Person, the incarnate Christ, the true Sun.

In its exalted formality the hymn must fulfill its measure, its formal parameters, and so must the circular dance as well. Then the souls are free again to deal with the pilgrim's questions, gladly turning from one care (worship) to another (instruction).

31–142. Then the silence . . . this one can fall: As happens in each of the cantos of the sun, the bulk of this canto is devoted to a speech of the chief representative of one of the circles (as will be amply clear before we leave the sun, Thomas Aquinas is given far greater prominence than Bonaventura, as befits the representative of the primacy of intellect).

31–33. Then the silence . . . related to me: The speaker so indicated is Thomas; "God's pauper" is saint Francis of Assisi, the main subject of Canto 11.

34–142. Now that one grain . . . this one can fall: Thomas's entire speech is an answer to the pilgrim's second doubt (for the two doubts, see 11.22–27); the first has been answered in the discussion of the degeneration of the Dominicans (11.118–39).

34–35. Now that one grain . . . stored away: Thomas has threshed the harvested stalks, separating the chaff of error from the kernels of truth (on *separating* cf. 11.27: "Here one must *distinguish* well"). The harvest imagery will recur, with greater and greater resonances that go back to Christ's agricultural parables.

37–48. You believe that . . . in the fifth light: Statement of the second doubt: if Adam (from whose rib Eve was formed—Gen. 2.21–25) and Christ (whose death on the Cross paid entirely the penalty for Adam's sin: cf. 7.25–42) received by infusion the highest degree of understanding of which unfallen human nature is capable, how can it be said that "no second ever arose" to equal the wealth within the fifth light, Solomon (i.e., his wisdom: 10.109–14)? Note that in both cases the seat of wisdom is the breast, as in lines 91–96 (i.e., the heart, which in the body corresponds to the sun in the cosmos; cf. *Inferno* Additional Note 2, Durling 1981b).

49–142. Now open your eyes . . . this one can fall: Aquinas's reply to the pilgrim's doubt has several stages: (1) direct and indirect creation and the perfection of nature in Adam and Christ (lines 52–87); (2) the specific wisdom prayed for by Solomon (lines 88–111); and (3) warning against hasty judgment (112–42).

49–51. Now open your eyes . . . center of a circle: For imagery of center and circumference of the circle, cf. 14.1–16, with notes. Thomas and the pilgrim are aiming at the same truth from different angles.

52–87. What does not die . . . those two persons: An important Neoplatonic statement of the distinction-cum-analogy between God's direct and indirect acts of creation, both conceived in terms of the radiation of light (the analogy with the sun is a governing category), in three parts: (1) the causality governing the entire cosmos (lines 52–66); (2) the source of imperfection in the sublunar (lines 67–78); and (3) return to God's direct creations (lines 79–87). See Additional Notes 10 and 11, and 29.127–45.

Note the repeated explicit emphasis on the participation of all three Persons of the Trinity in the creation (lines 53–54): "that Idea" is the Logos, "our Lord" is God the Father, and "love" is the Holy Spirit; similarly in lines 55–57: the "viva Luce" is the Logos, the "Lucente" is the Father, and "l'Amor" is the Holy Spirit; in lines 79–81: "love" is the Spirit, "sight" is the Logos [John 1.1–10], and the "first power" is the Father—note the order, indicating return). Whatever is radiated directly by the triune God (specifically mentioned are the angels—in lines 55–60: "nine subsistences") possesses its own specific perfection (line 81). Indirect creation is merely the reflection downward of the

same "living Light" (line 55) by the secondary causes (the angels and the heavenly bodies: lines 61–78).

Note how these lines take their beginning in God's "shining forth" and enact the reflection (embodied in the repetitions) downward, and then the *return* to God as direct Creator (lines 79–87): for Dante, the radiation of light (as directly experienced in the light of the sun) is the ultimate intellectual model of all causality, both above and below the moon. The astrological influence of the heavenly bodies is the analogue of God's "shining forth." Like 10.1–27 and Boethius' "O qui perpetua," lines 52–87 here are another microcosm, relating the procession of all things from, and their return to, God.

To what extent Dante regarded the historical Thomas as genuinely Neoplatonic is a legitimate question; the views ascribed to Thomas here would not have received his full assent (see the notes to lines 63–78); they are derived from the opinions of Albert the Great. Recent scholarship sees Aquinas as much more Neoplatonic than did the generation of Jacques Maritain and Étienne Gilson (see Simon Gilson, forthcoming), but there is perhaps a puckish humor at work in Dante having him voice here Albert's views as the ultimate metaphysical truth.

52–66. What does not die . . . by their motion: The fundamental causality governing the entire cosmos: the radiation of God's creative power, downward through the angels and the spheres they govern, into the sublunar.

52–54. What does not die . . . birth in love: "What does not die" refers to the angels and the heavens: everything from the moon on up is unchanging (this will be spelled out again in slightly different terms in 29.22–36).

55–60. for that living Light . . . one in itself: The "nine subsistences" are the nine orders of angels. Dante's striking coinages are conspicuous here: *disunarsi* [to dis-one oneself] and *intrearsi* [to enthree oneself] are efforts to avoid the banal connotations of ordinary words like *separate* or *triple* in favor of hieratic expressions appropriate to the mystery of the Trinity (see 29.13–45 and 127–45, with notes).

61–66. Thence it descends . . . by their motion: In more abstract terms, this is the cosmology already set forth in 2.112–48: the angels govern the descent of God's creative power through the concentric heavenly spheres. The "last potencies" are the potentialities by which matter is receptive of form. One of the important debates in the late Middle Ages concerned the extent to which matter itself contained potentialities ordered toward specific forms, called by Augustine "rationes seminales," an adaptation of Aristotle's concept of

entelechy [the indwelling of finality], or whether, as in the Platonic/Neoplatonic view, "first matter" was utterly formless. In 29.22–36 Dante clearly adopts the latter position. At stake was the prestige of Aristotle's key concepts (see next note) and the autonomy of nature.

63–66. fleeting contingencies . . . by their motion: As lines 67–78 will indicate, the heavens impose form on sublunar matter, which is like wax to their seal (as in 1.40–42). In the historical Aquinas's more Aristotelian view, the influence of the heavens was limited to moving sublunar things to actualize the forms inherent in matter ("motus ad formam" [movement toward form], as opposed to the imposition of form Dante describes: see Litt 1963).

67–78. The wax of these things . . . hand that trembles: The reason for the imperfection of earthly things is double: (1) the receptivity of matter to form varies (lines 67–72); and (2) the change in the relative positions of the heavenly bodies (the "motion of the Other"; see the note to "O qui perpetua," lines 15–17) causes variation in their efficacy. This passage is a major qualification of Carlo Martello's assertion that Nature always works perfectly (see 8.97–111, with notes).

67–68. The wax of these things . . . in one condition: "The wax of these things" is the matter that must be formed by the heavens; "what works" the wax is the heavenly bodies (Dante's phrase is the potentially misleading "chi la duce" [who works it], but it is clear that the angels themselves are unchanging; the pronoun *who* anticipates the personification of Nature in lines 76–78). For the verb *ducere* [works, molds] cf. Eng. "ductile."

68–69. therefore beneath . . . and less translucent: The antecedent of "it is more, etc." is "wax." The "Idea" is the form taken by the angelic Intelligence in God (specifically in the Logos; cf. line 53) for imposition on the sublunar like a seal on wax; this is restated in lines 73–75. That the Idea is itself light is explicit in lines 52–58.

70–72. Thus it comes about . . . different wits: An entire spectrum of more and less perfect imposition of form on matter is envisaged. For "wit" [*ingegno*] as a bodily faculty imposed by the stars, see 22.112–23, with notes, and Durling/Martinez 1990. On *Conv.* 4.21.3–8 see Additional Note 13.

73–78. If the wax . . . hand that trembles: A restatement of lines 67–69, with the fully developed personification of Nature (as usual, in the Middle Ages,

the term refers primarily to the operative power of the heavenly bodies). The "habit of art" includes both the theoretical equipment of an artist (or artisan) and the skill acquired by practice, but this artist does not have full control over his body (perhaps because of advancing age: this may be unconsciously a version of the topos "the world grown old").

79–87. Thus where the warm . . . those two persons: God created Adam ("thus was dust . . .") and the Holy Spirit fecundated the Virgin Mary ("the Virgin made pregnant") directly, without the intermediary of the angels and heavenly bodies. Thus the pilgrim's opinion that Adam and Christ were superior in intellect to all other human beings is correct; that they were superior to Eve is taken for granted.

Note the change in the order of naming the Persons of the Trinity: in lines 52–57 it is Logos-Father-Love-Logos; here it is Love-Logos-Father, implying the principle of return as well as that of progression.

88–90. Now if I did not . . . beginning of your words: The case of Solomon's wisdom has not yet been addressed.

91–111. but so that what . . . and of our Beloved: Thomas explains that Solomon, when asked by God to name a gift, asked for a specific kind of wisdom, that of a king, and so both the pilgrim's opinion and the saint's statement about Solomon are true.

91–96. think who he was . . . a worthy king: See 3 Kings 3.5–12:

> And the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, saying: Ask what thou wilt that I should give thee. And Solomon said: . . . O Lord God, thou hast made thy servant king in place of David my father: and I am but a child, and know not how to go out and come in. . . . Give therefore to thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people and discern between good and evil. For who shall be able to judge this people, thy people which is so numerous? And the word was pleasing to the Lord . . . And the Lord said to Solomon: Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life or riches, nor the lives of thy enemies, but hast asked for thyself wisdom to discern judgment, Behold I have done unto thee according to thy words, and have given thee a wise and understanding heart, insomuch that there hath been no one like thee before thee nor shall arise after thee.

(In the verses that follow, God promises Solomon riches and glory and, if he will keep his commandments, long life.) One sees that Thomas's statement in 10.113 is derived from this passage. On the heart, cf. the note to lines 37–48. At stake in this entire passage, though unstated, is the need to demonstrate that the new Scholasticism (particularly Dante's strongly Neoplatonic version of it), does not contradict the Bible.

97–102. not in order to know . . . a right angle: In commenting on Solomon's request, God lists three things he might have asked but did not. Thomas also lists things he did not ask for (four in number), but they are examples taken from theology, philosophy, natural science, and mathematics. For a related list of lesser pursuits, see 11.1–12.

97–98. the number of the Movers up here: The number of the angelic Movers of the spheres was a famous unanswerable question; it will reappear in Cantos 28–29.

98–99. if *necesse* with contingent ever made *necesse*: If the combination of a necessary cause with a contingency (a cause dependent on something outside itself) ever made necessity. Strictly speaking, only God is *necessary* in the sense of being utterly self-existent, independent of all externals; all else is contingent, and therefore the answer is *no*, though it is a tricky logical problem.

100. *si est dare primum motum esse* [if one should accept the existence of a first moved thing]**:** This is, properly speaking, a cosmological question: the existence of a ninth, undifferentiated sphere, encompassing all the others (the *primum mobile*).

101–2. whether in a semicircle . . . lacks a right angle: An elementary problem in geometry: any triangle inscribed in a semicircle will have a 90° angle.

103–11. Thus, if you consider . . . and of our Beloved: "Our first father" is Adam, and "our Beloved" is Christ (the bridegroom of the Canticle of Canticles in Christian exegesis).

109. With this distinction take what I said: Both of Thomas's explanations have insisted on the necessity of making proper distinctions (for the first explanation cf. 11.27). Cf. lines 115–23, with notes.

112–42. And let this ever . . . one can fall: Against erroneous judgments: the first part covers matters subject to human faculties: hasty, ignorant, and

unskilled judgments and their serious consequences (lines 112–29); the second part deals with God's judgments as unknowable (lines 130–42).

112–29. And let this ever . . . faces all distorted: The first part of the discussion of erroneous judgments. The general principle: in matters that are not obvious, it is essential to proceed "slowly" and carefully, making the proper distinctions, and to be reluctant ("like a weary man") to reach conclusions prematurely.

115–23. for surely he is low . . . the same as before: Neither affirmation nor denial ("either case") should be made without distinctions. "In either case" refers to "the *yes* and the *no* that you do not see" (line 114).

118–20. for it often happens . . . binds the intellect: The psychology of error: hastily formed judgments are frequently mistaken, because they are based on inadequate thought, information, or method (cf. the note to lines 124–26), and one is likely to become attached to one's own opinion ("affect [emotion; here: natural partiality to oneself] binds [restricts] the intellect," preventing it from recognizing the error, especially when one has made public pronouncements).

121–23. Whoever fishes . . . the same as before: A striking metaphor, closely related to that of the sea voyage. The truth must be fished for, because it lies beneath the surface of the phenomenal world ("the great sea of being," 1.113); it is not immediately apparent. The ingredients of an art are (cf. note to lines 73–78) doctrine (including method), ability, and skill acquired through practice. Note the parallels with the opening of Canto 2: the unskilled readers should not stray far from the shore (2.4–5), for if they lose their guide they may be lost (2.6); the more qualified readers have been practicing their art from early on (2.10–11); they will be capable of interpreting the poet correctly, if they follow him closely.

124–29. And open proof . . . faces all distorted: Pagan and early Christian examples of poor judgment resulting in momentous error.

124–26. And open proof . . . without knowing whither: The voyage metaphor is maintained. Dante's knowledge of these three early Greek thinkers was derived from Aristotle's critiques, which accuse them of erring both in the matter of their arguments (by presupposing false premises) and in their form (by not constructing valid syllogisms), technical aspects of the "art." Parmenides and Melissus are attacked in *Physics* 1.3 (cited in *Mon.* 3.4.4); Bryson (the son of the historian Herodotus) is cited by Aristotle as an example of one who

incorrectly applied logical principles in his effort to square the circle (*Analytica posteriora* 1.39b; see Kraus 1971, Stabile 1970).

127–29. thus did Sabellius . . . all distorted: Early Christian heresies: Sabellius and his followers denied the doctrine of the Trinity, asserting that its supposed Persons were merely modes of manifestation of the single God. Arius, a much more influential figure than Sabellius, held that the Son was a created being subordinate to the Father (this dispute lasted for decades; the orthodox doctrine was only defined at the Council of Nicaea in 325; see the relevant articles in *ED*, and Durling 2000a).

128–29. like swords to the Scriptures . . . all distorted: A vivid image: the curvature of sword blades makes them distorting mirrors of normal human faces; the heretics derived exaggerated and distorted readings from Scripture, overlooking its open meanings.

130–42. And let not people . . . one can fall: The second part of the discussion of erroneous judgments: God's judgments are inscrutable. Although the analogies in lines 132–38 are taken from fields accessible to human judgments, the target is the presumption of human beings (especially of the unlearned: "donna Berta" and "ser Martino" are proverbial) to suppose they know the mind of God. Cantos 10 and 12 have included three other figures doubts about whose salvation were current: Solomon, Siger, and Joachim of Fiore (for the relation of these cantos to Dante's anxieties and feelings of guilt concerning Guido Cavalcanti, see *Inf.* 10.63–72, with notes, and Durling 2001a).

Harvest, flowering, and sea voyages are key multivalent symbols of the last things (the "four last things": death, judgment, Heaven, and Hell). References to the ultimate harvest from the world become increasingly frequent in the *Paradiso*; the flowering of the wintry thorn is a traditional figure for the Virgin's giving birth; the sea voyage with its dangers is an ever-present category in the *Comedy* (see *Inferno* Additional Note 11, the *Inter cantica* to *Purgatorio* 1, and *Par.* 27.79–83, with notes).

Two of Thomas's examples of unpredictability, the ship sinking after reaching harbor and the briar's late blossoming, have been recognized since Carroll as implicit references to Guido da Montefeltro, who supposed that his retreat from warfare into a Franciscan convent, expressed in terms of the metaphor of ending a ship voyage, guaranteed his salvation, but who sinned and was damned (*Inf.* 27.79–127), and to his son Buonconte (*Purg.* 5.85–129; see our notes and *Inter cantica* there), saved by last-minute repentance with the name of Mary, the rose, on his lips. In relation to Guido, Dante has himself in mind

here, for in *Conv.* 4.28.8 (with the same nautical imagery), he had praised Guido for his retirement (see our note to *Inf.* 27.79–81); he does not go so far there as to explicitly judge Guido as saved (however, the other figure praised for his conversion there, Lancelot, is represented in the widely read *La Mort le roi Artu*, §§201–2, as dying a very holy death). This rounding out, at a higher level, of the theme of Guido and Buonconte is typical of the recapitulatory structures in the *Paradiso* (see Additional Note 14).

139–42. Let not dame Bertha . . . one can fall: Stealing and making offerings may seem to be chosen at random, but they refer to the thief with whom Christ was crucified who believed and was saved (Luke 23.39–43), and to Cain, whose offering was rejected by God (Gen. 4.3), and who was damned (cf. *Inf.* 32.58, with note).

142. for that one can rise up, and this one can fall: Note the solar terminology of *rise* and *fall* (and the parallels with *Inf.* 10.52, 72, and 121; cf. Durling 1981b).

CANTO 14

Dal centro al cerchio, e sì dal cerchio al centro, 1
movesi l'acqua in un ritondo vaso
secondo ch' è percosso fuori o dentro:
ne la mia mente fé sùbito caso 4
questo ch' io dico sì come si tacque
la glorïosa vita di Tommaso,
per la similitudine che nacque 7
del suo parlare e di quel di Beatrice,
a cui sì cominciar dopo lui piacque:
"A costui fa mestieri, e nol vi dice 10
né con la voce né pensando ancora,
d'un altro vero andare a la radice.
Diteli se la luce onde s'infiora 13
vostra sustanza rimarrà con voi
etternalmente sì com' ell' è ora,
e se rimane, dite come, poi 16
che sarete visibili rifatti,
esser porà ch' al veder non vi nòi."
Come, da più letizia pinti e tratti, 19
a la fïata quei che vanno a rota
levan la voce e rallegrano li atti:
così, a l'orazion pronta e divota, 22
li santi cerchi mostrar nova gioia
nel torneare e ne la mira nota.
Qual si lamenta perché qui si moia 25
per viver colà sù, non vide quive
lo refrigerio de l'etterna ploia.
Quell' uno e due e tre che sempre vive 28
e regna sempre in tre e 'n due e 'n uno,
non circunscritto, e tutto circunscrive,

CANTO 14

Sun, continued: the resurrection of the body—primacy of intellect—a third circle—Mars: fighters for the faith

From center to circumference, or else from circumference to center, the water moves in a round container according as it is struck without or within:

into my mind suddenly came what I have just said, as soon as the glorious life of Thomas fell silent,

because of the likeness that was born of his speech and that of Beatrice, who was pleased to begin thus after him:

"He needs, but does not tell you either with voice or as yet by thinking, to go to the root of another truth.

Tell him whether the light with which your substance blooms will remain with you eternally as it is now,

and if it remains, say how it can be, once you have eyes again, that seeing will not harm them."

As, impelled and drawn by greater gladness, those who dance in a round sometimes all at once raise their voices and move with greater happiness:

so, at her ready and devoted prayer, the holy circles showed new joy in their whirling and their wondrous song.

Whoever laments that we must die here to live up there, has not seen there the refreshings of the eternal rain.

That One and Two and Three that ever lives and always reigns in Three and Two and One, not circumscribed, but circumscribing all things,

tre volte era cantato da ciascuno
di quelli spirti con tal melodia
ch' ad ogne merto saria giusto muno.
E io udi' ne la luce più dia
del minor cerchio una voce modesta,
forse qual fu da l'angelo a Maria,
risponder: "Quanto fia lunga la festa
di Paradiso, tanto il nostro amore
si raggerà dintorno cotal vesta.
La sua chiarezza séguita l'ardore,
l'ardor la visïone, e quella è tanta
quant' ha di grazia sovra suo valore.
Come la carne gloriosa e santa
fia rivestita, la nostra persona
più grata fia per esser tutta quanta,
per che s'accrescerà ciò che ne dona
di gratuïto lume il sommo bene,
lume ch' a lui veder ne condiziona,
onde la visïon crescer convene,
crescer l'ardor che di quella s'accende,
crescer lo raggio che da esso vene.
Ma sì come carbon che fiamma rende
e per vivo candor quella soverchia
sì che la sua parvenza si difende:
così questo folgór che già ne cerchia
fia vinto in apparenza da la carne
che tutto dì la terra ricoperchia,
né potrà tanta luce affaticarne,
ché li organi del corpo saran forti
a tutto ciò che potrà dilettarne."
Tanto mi parver súbiti e accorti
e l'uno e l'altro coro a dicer "Amme!"
che ben mostrar disio d'i corpi morti,
forse non pur per lor, ma per le mamme,
per li padri, e per li altri che fuor cari
anzi che fosser sempiterne fiamme.
Ed ecco intorno, di chiarezza pari,
nascere un lustro sopra quel che v'era,
per guisa d'orizzonte che rischiari.

three times was sung by each of those spirits
with such melody that hearing it would be just
reward for any merit.
And I heard in the brightest light of the smaller
circle a modest voice, perhaps such as the angel's
was to Mary,
reply: "As long as the rejoicing of Paradise
lasts, so long will our love radiate this garment
about us.
Its brightness results from our ardor,
our ardor from our vision, and our vision is as great
as the grace it receives beyond its worth.
When we are once again clothed with our
glorious and holy flesh, our person will be more
pleasing by being whole,
therefore what the highest Good gives us of
gratuitous light will be increased, light that
enables us to see him,
thus vision must increase, the ardor must
increase that is kindled by it, the radiance must
increase that comes from this love.
And like a coal that gives off flame, but in its
vivid whiteness surpasses the flame, so that its
appearance still remains:
so this brightness that encircles us will be
surpassed in appearance by the flesh that today
is covered up by earth,
nor can so much light weary us, for the organs
of our body will be strong enough for whatever
can delight us."
So swift and eager were both choruses to say
"Amen!" that they well showed their desire for
their dead bodies,
perhaps not for themselves alone, but for their
mamas, for their fathers, and for the others who
were dear before they became sempiternal flames.
And behold all around, with equal brightness,
a luster born beyond what was already there, in
the manner of a horizon that is brightening.

E sì come al salir di prima sera
comincian per lo ciel nove parvenze,
sì che la vista pare e non par vera:
parvemi lì novelle sussistenze
cominiciare a vedere, e fare un giro
di fuor da l'altre due circunferenze.
Oh vero sfavillar del Santo Spiro!
Come si fece sùbito e candente
a li occhi miei, che, vinti, nol soffriro!
Ma Bëatrice sì bella e ridente
mi si mostrò che tra quelle vedute
si vuol lasciar che non seguir la mente.
Quindi ripreser li occhi miei virtute
a rilevarsi, e vidimi translato
sol con mia donna in più alta salute.
Ben m'accors' io ch' io ero più levato
per l'affocato riso de la stella,
che mi parea più roggio che l'usato.
Con tutto 'l core e con quella favella
ch' è una in tutti, a Dio feci olocausto
qual conveniesi a la grazia novella.
E non er' anco del mio petto essausto
l'ardor del sacrificio, ch' io conobbi
esso litare stato accetto e fausto,
ché con tanto lucore e tanto robbi
m'apparvero splendor dentro a due raggi
ch' io dissi: "O Elïòs, che sì li addobbi!"
Come, distinta da minori e maggi
lumi, biancheggia tra ' poli del mondo
Galassia sì che fa dubbiar ben saggi:
sì costellati facean nel profondo
Marte quei raggi il venerabil segno
che fan giunture di quadranti in tondo.
Qui vince la memoria mia lo 'ngegno,
ché quella croce lampeggiava Cristo
sì ch' io non so trovare essempro degno,
ma chi prende sua croce e segue Cristo
ancor mi scuserà di quel ch'io lasso,
vedendo in quell' albor balenar Cristo.

And just as, when early evening rises, the sky
begins to change appearance, so that the sight
both seems and does not seem true:
so it seemed that I began to see new
subsistences, making a circle enclosing the other
two circumferences.
Oh true flashing of the Holy Spirit! How it
became swift and blazing to my eyes, which,
overcome, could not sustain it!
But Beatrice became to me so beautiful and
smiling that the sight must be left among those
that did not follow my memory.
Thence my eyes took strength again to lift
themselves up, and I saw that I was translated
alone with my lady into a higher blessedness.
I well perceived that I had risen higher, by the
fiery smile of the star, which seemed to me more
flame-colored than usual.
With all my heart and with that speech which is
the same in all of us, I made such a holocaust to
God as befitted this new grace.
The ardor of my sacrifice had not yet burnt
itself out in my breast, when I knew the offering to
be accepted and favored,
for so shining and so fiery appeared splendors
within two rays that I said: "O Helios, how you
clothe them!"
As, varied with lesser and greater lights, the
Galaxy shines white between the poles of the
world and makes the sages doubt:
so those rays, arranged in the depths of Mars,
made the venerable sign formed by the joining of
the quadrants of a circle.
Here my memory outstrips my wit, for that
cross flashed forth Christ, and I cannot find a
worthy comparison,
but whoever takes up his cross and follows
Christ, will yet excuse me for what I must leave out,
seeing in that whiteness the blazing forth of Christ.

Di corno in corno e tra la cima e 'l basso
si movien lumi, scintillando forte
nel congiugnersi insieme e nel trapasso:
così si veggion qui diritte e torte,
veloci e tarde, rinovando vista,
le minuzie d'i corpi, lunghe e corte,
moversi per lo raggio onde si lista
talvolta l'ombra che per sua difesa
la gente con ingegno e arte acquista.
E come giga e arpa, in tempra tesa,
di molte corde fa dolce tintinno
a tal da cui la nota non è intesa:
così da' lumi che lì m'apparinno
s'accogliea per la croce una melode
che mi rapiva, sanza intender l'inno.
Ben m'accors' io ch'elli era d'alte lode,
però ch'a me venìa "Resurgi" e "Vinci,"
come a colui che non intende e ode.
Io m'innamorava tanto quinci
che 'nfino a lì non fu alcuna cosa
che mi legasse con sì dolci vinci.
Forse la mia parola par troppo osa,
posponendo il piacer de li occhi belli
ne' quai mirando mio disio ha posa,
ma chi s'avvede che i vivi suggelli
d'ogne bellezza più fanno più suso,
e ch' io non m'era lì rivolto a quelli,
escusar puommi di quel ch' io m'accuso
per escusarmi, e vedermi dir vero:
ché 'l piacer santo non è qui dischiuso,
perché si fa montando più sincero.

From horn to horn and from summit to base
lights were moving, scintillating brightly when
meeting together and when passing on:
thus down here we see moving, straight and
oblique, swift and slow, always changing, some
long, some short, the tiny motes
in the sunbeam that sometime stripes the
shade that with wit and art people make for their
defence.
And as viol and harp, stretched and tuned,
make a sweet tintinnus of many strings to one
who cannot distinguish the melody:
so from the lights that appeared to me, I heard
along the cross a melody that ravished me, though
I could not grasp the hymn.
Well did I perceive that it was of high praise,
for "Arise" and "Conquer" came to me, as to one
who does not understand, although he hears.
I was falling so in love with it, that until then
there had been nothing that bound me with such
sweet bonds.
Perhaps my words appear too daring, in rating
less the pleasure of her sweet eyes, in which, when
I gaze, my desire rests,
but whoever perceives that those lively seals of
all beauty have more power higher up, and that I
had not yet turned to see them there,
can excuse me of the fault—I accuse myself
here as my excuse—and see that I tell the truth:
for the holy pleasure is not excluded here,
since it becomes, ascending, ever purer.

NOTES

1–81. From center . . . follow my memory: More than half the canto is devoted to the last events in the heaven of the sun.

1–9. From center . . . thus after him: The phenomenon described at the beginning of this canto implies the image of concentric circles, either spreading out from a central point (as when a weight has been dropped into water) or converging on the center of a circular container of water that has been struck on its outer surface. A circle is defined as a relation between a circumference and a center, of course, and one function of this beginning, like that of Canto 13, is to reemphasize the pattern governing all the cantos of the sun (all of which, except for Canto 11, begin with references to circles, with fundamentally astronomical reference), and here to reestablish Beatrice and the pilgrim as the defining center: all the discourse of these cantos has been prompted by questions in the pilgrim's mind, and Beatrice, chief mediator, now speaks for him, introducing the last subject dealt with in the sun (cf. the note to lines 79–81).

6. the glorious life of Thomas: Thomas is in glory (Heaven), but there is a reference to his fame as well as to his sun-like mind. The term *life* refers to the soul as the principle of life.

7–8. because of the likeness . . . that of Beatrice: Beatrice's words, spoken from the center, will have great effect on the surrounding circles, as we shall see, closely related to the effect of Thomas's words, which illuminate the center.

10–18. He needs, but does . . . will not harm them: The light that encloses the souls, as we learned in 5.136 and 8.52–54 (on which see note), is that of their rejoicing. Beatrice's question is what it will become when the souls have been reunited with their bodies (on the airy bodies of the disembodied souls, radiated like light, see *Purg.* 25.88–102, with note; on the resurrected body, see the note to lines 29–60). One may note in passing that the question implicitly involves the question whether the pilgrim's eyes are physically present.

12, 13. root, blooms: For the metaphor of blossoming flowers, see 10.91–93, with notes.

19–33. As, impelled and drawn . . . reward for any merit: The joyous reaction to Beatrice's question of the circles of souls surrounding them, again in terms of the figure of the round dance (first introduced in 10.79–81).

20. all at once: Dante's expression, "a la fiata" [at one time], uses one of the normal terms for "occasion" [*fiata*], which in other contexts stands for "a breath" (cf. *Inf.* 5. 135, with note); here the suggestion is that people singing together would normally take breath simultaneously.

25–27. Whoever laments . . . the eternal rain: An exalted statement of the superiority of heavenly to earthly joys (cf. *Purg.* 15.61–75, with notes). In both OT and NT, rain is frequently cited as preeminent among God's blessings (Ps. 147.8, Heb. 6.7) and, in association with manna (appearing like dew—Ex. 16.13–15—and soon assimilated to rain—Ps.78.24), a chief symbol of God's grace. *Ploia* [rain] (also in 24.91), the Provençal term, is used for the solemn effect of its form, more Latinate than *pioggia*.

28–33. That One and Two . . . reward for any merit: The song of the thrice-circling souls. The variation of the order in which the Persons of the Trinity are named is significant (see the note to 13.79–87). Another conspicuous Latinism occurs here: *muno* [reward], from Lat. *munus*.

30. not circumscribed . . . all things: Circumscription is, literally, the *drawing*, the [de]scribing, of a circle. Note the parallel with *Purg.* 11.1–2; here God has drawn the two circles and will draw a third soon (lines 67–75). There is also a reference to the image of God circumscribing the universe with a compass (see Zahlten 1979).

34–81. And I heard in the brightest . . . follow my memory: Solomon's anwer to the question, followed by its effect.

34–36. the brightest light . . . was to Mary: In 10.109 Solomon is called the most beautiful; here he is the "brightest" of the inner circle; the expressions are equivalent. His authorship of the Canticle of Canticles (see the note to 10.109–14) probably accounts for the choice: in the Middle Ages, the bridegroom of the book was identified as Christ, the bride as the individual soul, as the Virgin Mary, and/or as the Church; the second of these possibilities seems alluded to in the reference to the angel Gabriel and the Annunciation (cf. *Purg.*10.34–45, with notes).

37–60. As long as the rejoicing . . . whatever can delight us: Solomon explains the source of the brightness of the blessed souls and the change that will occur when they are reunited with their bodies. Medieval conceptions of the resurrected ("glorious") body are based on the classic discussion in 1 Cor. 15.35–53:

> But some man will say, How do the dead rise again? or with what manner of body shall they come? . . . All flesh is not the same flesh: but

> one is the flesh of man, another of beasts, another of birds, another of fishes. And there are bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial: but one is the glory of the celestial, and another of the terrestrial. One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption . . . It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body . . . Therefore as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear also the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God: neither shall corruption possess incorruption . . . In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible: and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility; and this mortal must put on immortality. And when this mortal hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying . . . : *Death is swallowed up in victory*.

The qualities of the "glorious" or "spiritual" body referred to by saint Paul were further developed and systematized as incorruptibility, wholeness, impassibility, agility, and brightness (see *ST* Suppl. qq. 80–85, CG 4, 82–88). Dante adopts the Dominican position, according to which the degree of the intellectual vision of God determines other aspects of beatitude *(ST* Suppl. q. 93); see Additional Note 3.

37–42. As long as the rejoicing . . . beyond its worth: The present state of the souls: their "garment" of brightness is a function of their "ardor" (their love), which in turn results from the depth of their "vision" of God. For the clothing imagery, cf. 2 Cor. 5.1–4:

> For we know, if our earthly house of this habitation [i.e., our body] be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven. For in this [body] we groan, desiring to be clothed over with our habitation that is from heaven, yet so that we be found clothed, not naked . . . because we would not be unclothed, but clothed over, that that which is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

40–41. Its brightness results . . . from our vision: As Bosco/Reggio point out, these lines are close to the formulation in Bonaventura's *Soliloquia* 4.5 (Bonaventura was more moderate than later Franciscans).

43–60. When we are once again . . . whatever can delight us: The happiness of the blessed will increase after the resurrection. Dante envisions a kind of mutual intensification of body and soul.

43–51. When we are once again . . . from this love: Solomon attributes the increase of beatitude resulting from the assumption of the glorified body to the increase of grace bestowed on the wholeness of reunified human nature. "Our person will be more pleasing by being whole" indicates that it will be more pleasing to God in the first instance, but pleasing oneself and others is not excluded by the expression.

46–51. therefore what the highest . . . from this love: These are the central lines of the twenty-four lines of Solomon's speech. God's grace consists of additional light; vision (now intensified by the additional light) is again the innermost and basic aspect of beatitude, and from their vision first the souls' ardor and then their brightness radiate, the derivation of each from the preceding being emphasized by the greater fullness of statement and by the chiasmus in relation to the first statement of the structure of beatitude (lines 40–43: brightness, ardor, vision, grace—from outer to inner).

48–49. light that enables . . . vision must increase: The hinge of the passage, its central pair of lines, its very emphasis somewhat obscuring the possibility that the love felt for the regained body, and for God's grace in its bestowal, might have a causal relation to the increase of grace and thus of light (that might somewhat qualify the theme of the primacy of intellect).

52–60. And like a coal . . . whatever can delight us: The relation of the glorious body to the present radiance of the soul: the body will not disappear in the brightness of the soul (as it appears to do in the pilgrim's imaginings), but will add additional brightness, resulting from the increased happiness of governing the now-perfected body. (Cf. *ST* Suppl. q. 85 a. 1: "The brightness [of the glorified body] is caused by the overflowing brightness of the soul within it"; the same position in *CG* 4, 86: Dante somewhat complicates the matter by imagining a glory proper to the body.)

58–60. nor can so much light . . . whatever can delight us: This is a statement of the principle of the *impassibility* of the glorified body.

61–66. So swift and eager . . . sempiternal flames: A strong acknowledgment of the desire of the disembodied souls for reunion with their bodies (see the note to lines 48–49 above).

67–78. And behold . . . not sustain it: A third circle of an unspecified number of souls begins to appear, enclosing the first two. The three circles surrounding the pilgrim and Beatrice are strictly parallel to the structure just described: God's grace (the center) illuminates the intellect (first circle of teachers, intellectualists proclaiming the primacy of intellect); the degree of vision produces love (the second circle, voluntarists); the third circle, foreseeing the glorified body (the last fruit of the salvation earned by intellect and will together). Cf. saint Paul on the glorified body as "clothing over" the soul (note to lines 37–42); for the risen body as "garment" and "stole," see also 25.88–96 and 127–29, with notes.

69–78. in the manner . . . not sustain it: A brightening horizon is a dawn image, of course, and the "new subsistences" are thus at first, like the first two circles, identified as suns; the simile of lines 70–72 invokes evening twilight to express the initial faintness of the new lights, but like rising suns they become in lines 76–78 too strong for his eyes to bear.

73–74. I began to see new subsistences: These beings are not identified. The philosophical term *subsistence* (referring to a being as autonomous, as distinct from being the substrate of qualities), is used in 13.59 (and cf. 29.15) of the nine orders of angels, and in 33.115 of the unity of God's existence, logically prior to the distinction of the Persons of the Trinity). Maierù 1978 takes it here to refer to other souls "occupying" the sun, which is the simplest explanation, but why the expression is especially appropriate here is not entirely clear; its ambiguity is probably meant to suggest the mysteriousness of the future resurrection of the body.

76–78. Oh true flashing . . . not sustain it: The Holy Spirit is identified with love (see the note to 13.52–87) and the desire of all the souls mentioned in lines 61–66, presumably shared by the "new subsistences," who like the others rejoice in its future fulfillment as described by Solomon.

79–81. But Beatrice . . . follow my memory: The last phase of the pilgrim's participation in this great explosion of joy is a return to the center. These lines are a version of the inexpressibility topos: Beatrice's beauty became so transcendent that the sight did not follow (i.e., could not be retained in) the poet's memory; cf. 1.7–9 ("the memory cannot follow it"), with note. Lines 1–9 (cf. our note) may now be taken as referring proleptically to the explosion: the center profoundly affecting the circumference, even invoking a further circumference that in turn converges on and powerfully intensifies the center.

82–139. Thence my eyes . . . ascending, ever purer: The remaining two-fifths of the canto relate arrival in the planet Mars.

82–87. Thence my eyes . . . more flame-colored than usual: The transition to Mars has also been simultaneous (cf. 10.34–39, with notes); for the redness of Mars, cf. *Purg.* 2.13–15. The pilgrim's vision is gradually becoming stronger; the theme has been acquiring emphasis (cf. 5.1–3, 22.124–26, with notes).

82. Thence my eyes took strength: From the sight of Beatrice's increased beauty, the pilgrim takes the strength to inspect his new location.

88–90. With all my heart . . . this new grace: The "speech which is the same in all of us" is the wordless language of the heart. A holocaust [Gr. *hólos*, whole, + *kaustos*, burnt] was a burnt offering in which an entire animal was offered. Dante has in mind Ps. 50.18–19: "For if thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would indeed have given it: with burnt offerings thou wilt not be delighted. A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit: a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." The emphasis is on the poet's entire devotion. "This new grace" is his reception in Mars.

91–93. The ardor of my sacrifice . . . accepted and favored: As we have seen in the sun, love is regularly referred to as fire: *ardore* [burning], *affocato* [fiery], *roggio* and *robbio* [red hot], *balenare* [flash, as lightning], *lampo* [lightning], *lampeggiare* [flash, properly of lightning]. The burning love of the pilgrim's offering of himself to God is answered by the change in the appearance of the planet (we are within it), described next. Compare the change in what is seen in the sun, occasioned by the pilgrim's prayer and Beatrice's reaction to it (10.52–63).

94–95. for so shining and . . . within two rays: Although the image is as yet indefinite (it will be further specified in lines 97–102 and 109–17), it is clear that the "splendors" are the souls of the blessed. The vision is closely related to the circle and sun imagery of the cantos of the sun. There the souls are clothed with the semblance of the sun; here the Crusaders conform to the figure of the crusader's cross with which they were signed in life: individual embodiments of the influence of the planets, they are all miniature versions of their respective planets (for the same phenomenon in Jupiter and Saturn, see the notesto the respective cantos).

96. O Helios, how you clothe them: *Helios* [Gr. sun] was one of the names of the pagan sun god, here used of the true Sun (as in 1.13: "O buono Appollo"

[O good Apollo]); the commentators point out that Uguccione da Pisa's *Magnae derivationes* derives the Greek term from Heb. *El* (a name of God; cf. 26.133–38, with notes). In any case, the true Sun clothes these souls, and it must be with the radiance of their rejoicing. But they are God's warriors, and Dante's *addobbare* [to dub, clothe], is derived from the ceremony of knighting, in which the sponsor of the new knight girded him with the sword to be wielded in the service of right, and often provided armor and clothing (Flori 1976, Flori 1978, Keen 1984, Schnapp 1986). The ceremonies of knighting and becoming a crusader are distinct (noncombatants, too, took the cross), but there is a strong suggestion that each soul here bears the sign of the Cross (for the theme of the poet's metaphorical knighthood, see Canto 17).

97–99. As, varied with . . . makes the sages doubt The grandiose image of a vast, cruciform galaxy [like the Milky Way: Gr. *gála*, milk] consisting of myriad sparkling lights (ruddy, according to line 94) against the background of the planet (line 110).

In *Conv.* 2.14.5–13 Dante discusses the galaxy at some length, noting various ancient explanations of it, including the myth of Phaethon (cf. *Inferno* Additional Note 6, *Paradiso* Additional Note 7) and Aristotle's *Meteorologica* 1.2.6, which he rejects, following instead Albertus Magnus and Aquinas (see the notes ad loc. in the Vasoli/De Robertis edition [*Opere minori*, vol. 1]). In *Comm.* 1.12 Macrobius says that the points where the ecliptic intersects the Milky Way (erroneously identified by him with the solstices in Cancer and Capricorn) are the "gates of the sun," through which the soul first descends into corporeality and later returns to its original home, respectively.

100–102. sign formed by . . . of a circle: The Cross is imagined as formed within a circle, whether visibly traced or implied by the horizon of the planet itself (it is a so-called Greek cross). Both the circle and the diameters forming the Cross in it are clearly implied, and, as lines 109–10 indicate, the arms of the Cross are horizontal, the support vertical.

103–8. Here my memory . . . blazing forth of Christ: The exact manner of "flashing forth" Christ is left to the reader's imagination. Basic to the idea is that of God's warriors shouldering their individual crosses, accepting suffering and death in imitation of him, so that the collective image of all of them coalesces as the crucified Christ writ large, as it were. Conspicuous in the passage is the word *Christ* in rhyme with itself: the word appears in other positions in the line (for instance, in *Purg.* 21.8), but in final position it rhymes only with itself; this occurs four times in the poem, all in the *Paradiso*; see the note to 12.71–75.

106–8. but whoever takes . . . forth of Christ: When the true Christian sees this sight after his death, he will excuse the pilgrim's inability to describe it. See Matt. 16. 24–26: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" [Si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum, et tollat crucem suam, et sequatur me] (cf. Matt. 10.24, Mark 8.33, Luke 9.23 and 14.27). The citation reveals the basis of the entire symbolism of the "taking on" of the cross by crusaders: the emblem was worn on the shoulder as a public acceptance of the Gospel precept.

109–17. From horn to horn . . . for their defense: The "splendors within two rays" are now more fully characterized. The "horns" are the extremities of the two horizontal arms of the Cross.

112–17. thus down here . . . for their defense: The striking image of the motes floating in the sunlight that stripes a dark interior is both remarkably intimate (though it includes a reference to the prevalence of warfare on earth) and grandiose when applied to the gigantic spectacle in the planet.

118–26. And as viol and harp . . . although he hears: Now the singing of the souls is introduced, surpassingly sweet though not comprehensible to the pilgrim, who only catches two words of it.

119. make a sweet . . . many strings: Our "tintinnus" is not a misprint for *tintinnitus* [a purely subjective ringing or roaring in the ear], but a neologism for Dante's term "tintinno," the same onomatopoeia as in 10.143 ("sounding *tin tin* with so sweet a note"), an oddly thin timbre to modern ears, accustomed to a much fuller sound from the violin family than medieval viols or lutes could provide.

124–26. Well did I perceive . . . although he hears: He perceives that the song is a hymn of praise to Christ, closely related to many liturgical songs though presumably not available on earth. The Resurrection was celebrated in the liturgy in terms drawing on the imagery of Roman triumph, a rich tradition representing Christ as triumphant conqueror (see nos. 38, 42, 54, 55, 57, 133, 147 in Raby 1959). As warriors of God, the souls in Mars have a special relation to these themes; many of them, though not all, died in battle against the Saracens (see 18.28–48, with notes).

126. as to one who does not understand, although he hears: Note the parallel with *Purg.* 9.142–45.

127–29. I was falling . . . such sweet bonds: Nothing the pilgrim has so far experienced has so captured him with its sweetness.

130–39. Perhaps my words…ascending, ever purer: Having characterized the hymn of the souls in Mars as the loveliest thing so far encountered, the poet corrects the impression he may have given that it was even lovelier than Beatrice's eyes—but he has not yet gazed into them in this sphere. They acquire greater beauty with each upward move, and by implication are even lovelier than the sights and sounds just praised. The passage may seem to contradict line 82, but that line does not in fact mention Beatrice's eyes.

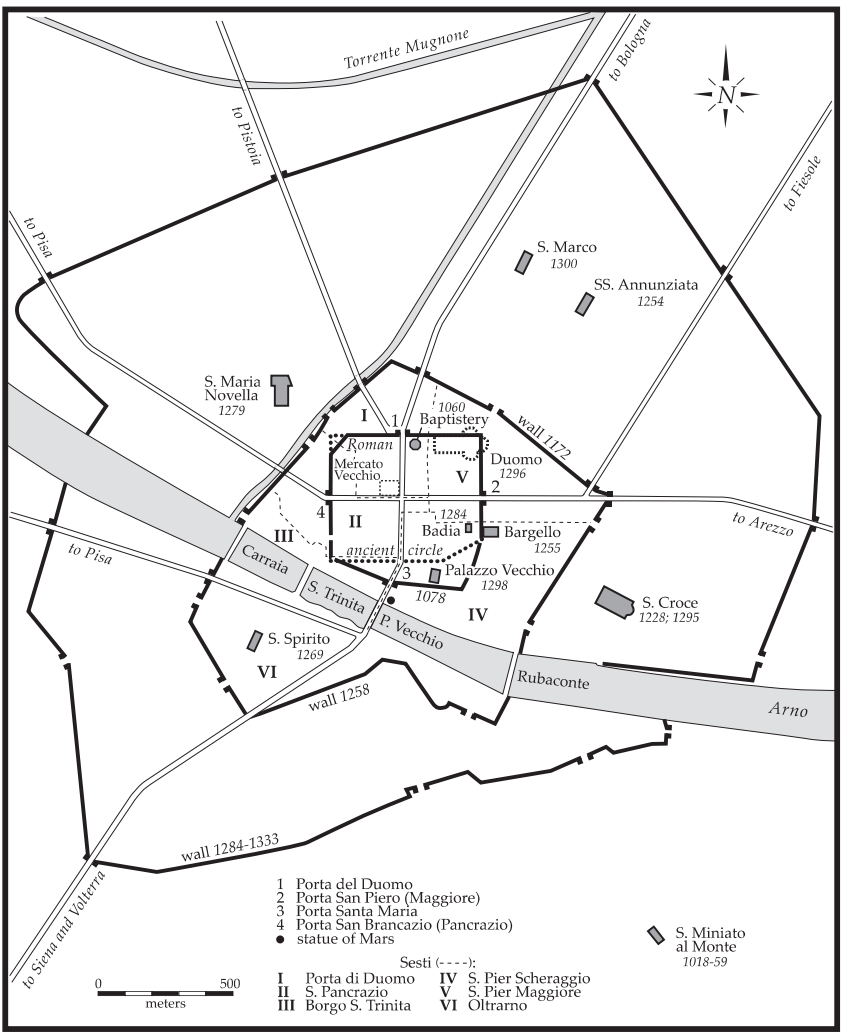

Figure 10. Florence with its early walls

CANTO 15

Benigna volontade—in che si liqua
sempre l'amor che drittamente spira,
come cupidità fa ne la iniqua—
silenzio puose a quella dolce lira
e fece quietar le sante corde
che la destra del Cielo allenta e tira.
Come saranno a' giusti preghi sorde
quelle sustanze che, per darmi voglia
ch' io le pregassi, a tacer fur concorde?
Bene è che sanza termine si doglia
chi per amor di cosa che non duri
etternalmente quello amor si spoglia.
Quale per li seren tranquilli e puri
discorre ad ora ad or sùbito foco,
movendo li occhi che stavan sicuri,
e pare stella che tramuti loco,
se non che da la parte ond' e' s'accende
nulla sen perde, ed esso dura poco:
tale dal corno che 'n destro si stende
a piè di quella croce corse un astro
de la costellazion che lì resplende;
né si partì la gemma dal suo nastro,
ma per la lista radïal trascorse,
che parve foco dietro ad alabastro.
Sì pïa l'ombra d'Anchise si porse,
se fede merta nostra maggior musa,
quando in Eliso del figlio s'accorse.
"O sanguis meus! O superinfusa
gratïa Dei! Sicut tibi cui
bis unquam Celi ianüa reclusa?"

CANTO 15

Mars, continued: Cacciaguida—Florence in his time—
the family name —his life and death

A good will—into which the love that breathes
for justice resolves itself, just as cupidity does
into a wicked will—
imposed silence on that sweet lyre and quieted
the holy strings that the right hand of Heaven
loosens and tightens.
How could those substances be deaf to just
requests, who, so as to give me the will to beg
them, fell silent with one accord?
It is well that he grieve without end who, for
love of a thing that does not last eternally, divests
himself of that other love.
As across a cloudless, pure, and tranquil sky
from time to time there darts a sudden fire,
moving our eyes, previously fixed,
and it seems a star changing place, except that
in the place where it began no star is lost, and it
lasts but little:
so, from the horn that extends to the right,
down to the foot of the cross, there darted a star
of the constellation resplendent there;
nor did the gem leave its ribbon, but ran along
the radiating lines, and it showed like fire behind alabaster.
So did the shade of Anchises reach out
devotedly, if our greatest Muse deserves belief,
when in Elysium he perceived his son.
"O my blood! O poured out from above
grace of God! To whom as to you
has the gate of Heaven ever been twice opened?"

Così quel lume, ond' io m'attesi a lui;
poscia rivolsi a la mia donna il viso,
e quinci e quindi stupefatto fui,
ché dentro a li occhi suoi ardeva un riso
tal ch'io pensai co' miei toccar lo fondo
de la mia gloria e del mio Paradiso.
Indi, a udire e a veder giocondo,
giunse lo spirto al suo principio cose
ch' io non lo 'ntesi, sì parlò profondo,
né per elezïon mi si nascose,
ma per necessità, ché 'l suo concetto
al segno d'i mortal si soprapuose.
E quando l'arco de l'ardente affetto
fu sì sfogato che 'l parlar discese
inver' lo segno del nostro intelletto,
la prima cosa che per me s'intese:
"Benedetto sia tu," fu, "trino e uno,
che nel mio seme se' tanto cortese!"
E seguì: "Grato e lontano digiuno,
tratto leggendo del magno volume
du' non si muta mai bianco né bruno,
solvuto hai, figlio, dentro a questo lume
in ch' io ti parlo, mercé di colei
ch' a l'alto volo ti vestì le piume.
Tu credi che a me tuo pensier mei
da quel ch' è primo così come raia
da l'*un*, se si conosce, il *cinque* e 'l *sei*,
e però ch' io mi sia e perch' io paia
più gaudioso a te non mi domandi
che alcun altro in questa turba gaia.
Tu credi 'l vero, ché i minori e ' grandi
di questa vita miran ne lo speglio
in che prima che pensi il pensier pandi,
ma perché 'l sacro amore in che io veglio
con perpetüa vista, e che m'asseta
di dolce disïar, s'adempia meglio,
la voce tua sicura, balda e lieta
suoni la volontà, suoni 'l disio
a che la mia risposta è già decreta!"

Thus that light, and I gave it my attention; then I turned my gaze back to my lady, and on both sides I was amazed,

for within her eyes there burned such a smile that I thought my eyes must be touching the utmost depth of my glory and my Paradise.

Then, joyous to hear and to see, the spirit added to his beginning things I did not understand, so deeply he spoke,

nor by choice did he hide them from me, but by necessity, for his meaning shot beyond the mark of mortals.

And when the arc of his burning affect had so spent itself that his speech descended toward the target of our intellect,

the first thing understood by me was: "Blessed be you, Trine and One, who are so courteous to my seed!"

And he continued: "Pleasing and long hunger, drawn from reading in the great volume where white and black are never changed,

you have satisfied, son, within this light where I speak with you, thanks to her who clothed you with the feathers for your high flight.

You believe that your thought flows to me from him who is First, just as from *one*, if known, ray forth both *five* and *six*,

and therefore who I may be, and why I appear more joyous before you than any other in this happy throng, you do not ask.

You believe the truth, for the lesser and the great in this life gaze into the Mirror in which, before you think, you reveal your thought,

but that the holy love in which I wake with perpetual sight, and which fills me ever with sweet thirsting, may the better be fulfilled,

let your voice, sure, bold, and glad, sound out your wish, sound out your desire, to which my answer is already decreed!"

Io mi volsi a Beatrice, e quella udio
pria ch' io parlassi, e arrisemi un cenno
che fece crescer l'ali al voler mio.
Poi cominicai così: "L'affetto e 'l senno,
come la prima equalità v'apparse,
d'un peso per ciascun di voi si fenno,
però che 'l sol che v'allumò e arse
col caldo e con la luce è sì iguali
che tutte simiglianze sono scarse.
Ma voglia e argomento ne' mortali,
per la cagion ch' a voi è manifesta,
diversamente son pennuti in ali,
ond' io, che son mortal, mi sento in questa
disagguaglianza, e però non ringrazio
se non col core a la paterna festa.
Ben supplico io a te, vivo topazio
che questa gioia prezïosa ingemmi,
perché mi facci del tuo nome sazio."
"O fronda mia in che io mi compiacemmi
pur aspettando, io fui la tua radice!"
Cotal principio, rispondendo, femmi.
Poscia mi disse: "Quel da cui si dice
tua cognazione, e che cent' anni e piùe
girato ha 'l monte in la prima cornice,
mio figlio fu e tuo bisavol fue:
ben si convien che la lunga fatica
tu li raccorci con l'opere tue.
Fiorenza dentro de la cerchia antica
ond' ella toglie ancora e terza e nona
si stava in pace, sobria e pudica.
Non avea catenella, non corona,
non gonne contigiate, non cintura
che fosse a veder più che la persona.
Non faceva, nascendo, ancor paura
la figlia al padre, ché 'l tempo e la dote
non fuggien quinci e quindi la misura.
Non avea case di famiglia vòte,
non v'era giunto ancor Sardanapalo
a mostrar ciò che 'n camera si puote.

I turned to Beatrice, and she heard before I
spoke, and she smiled a sign to me that made
my wish grow wings.
Then I began thus: "Love and understanding,
as soon as the first Equality appeared to you,
became of one weight in each of you,
since the Sun that kindled and burnt you
bestows his warmth and light so evenly that all
comparisons fall short.
But will and knowledge in us mortals, for the
reason that is manifest to you, have differently
feathered wings,
and therefore I, who am mortal, am caught in
that inequality and can only thank you in my
heart for your paternal rejoicing.
But I beg you, living topaz that begem this
precious jewel, that you satisfy me with your
name."
"O my branch, in whom I have been well
pleased even while waiting, I was your root!"
Such was the beginning of his reply.
Then he said to me: "He from whom you take
your family name, who for a hundred years and
more has been circling the mountain on the first ledge,
was my son and your great-grandfather: truly it
will be fitting for you to shorten his long labor with
your works.
Florence within the ancient circle from which
she still takes both tierce and nones dwelt in
peace, sober and modest.
She had no gold chain, no crown, no
embroidered gowns, no belt more to be looked
at than its wearer.
The daughter did not yet, when born, make her
father fear, for ages and dowries did not yet flee
the measure, those downward, these upward.
There were no houses emptied of their
families, Sardanapalus had not yet come to show
what can be done in a bedchamber.

Non era vinto ancora Montemalo
dal vostro Uccellatoio, che com' è vinto
nel montar sù così sarà nel calo.
Bellincion Berti vid' io andar cinto
di cuoio e d'osso, e venir da lo specchio
la donna sua sanza 'l viso dipinto,
e vidi quel d'i Nerli e quel del Vecchio
esser contenti a la pelle scoperta,
e le sue donne al fuso e al pennecchio.
Oh fortunate! ciascuna era certa
de la sua sepultura, e ancor nulla
era per Francia nel letto diserta.
L'una vegghiava a studio de la culla
e, consolando, usava l'idïoma
che prima i padri e le madri trastulla;
l'altra, traendo a la rocca la chioma,
favoleggiava con la sua famiglia
d'i Troiani, di Fiesole e di Roma.
Saria tenuta allor tal maraviglia
una Cianghella, un Lapo Salterello,
qual or saria Cincinnato e Corniglia.
A così riposato, a così bello
viver di cittadini, a così fida
cittadinanza, a così dolce ostello,
Maria mi diè, chiamata in alte grida,
e ne l'antico vostro Batisteo
insieme fui cristiano e Cacciaguida.
Moronto fu mio frate ed Eliseo;
mia donna venne a me di val di Pado,
e quindi il sopranome tuo si feo.
Poi seguitai lo 'mperador Currado,
ed el mi cinse de la sua milizia,
tanto per bene ovrar li venni in grado.
Dietro li andai incontro a la nequizia
di quella legge il cui popolo usurpa,
per colpa d'i pastor, vostra giustizia.
Quivi fu' io da quella gente turpa
disviluppato dal mondo fallace,
lo cui amor molt' anime deturpa,
e venni dal martiro a questa pace."

Montemalo was not yet surpassed by your
Uccellatoio, and as it is surpassed in growing so
it will be in declining.
Bellincion Berti I saw go wearing leather and
bone, and his lady coming from the mirror
without a painted face,
and I saw him of the Nerli and him of the del
Vecchio contented with plain leather, and their
ladies with the spindle and the distaff.
Oh happy ladies! each was sure of her burial
place, and none as yet had been left alone in her
bed because of France.
This one watched late in her care of the cradle,
and, comforting, used the idiom that first delights
fathers and mothers;
this other, drawing the strands from the distaff,
told with her household tales of the Trojans, of
Fiesole, and of Rome.
A Cianghella, a Lapo Salterello would have
then been thought as much a wonder as now
Cincinnatus or Cornelia.
To so peaceful, to so comely a life of citizens,
to so loyal a citizenry, to so sweet a dwelling,
Mary gave me, invoked with loud cries, and in
your ancient Baptistery I became at the same
time a Christian and Cacciaguida.
Moronto was my brother, and Eliseo; my lady
came to me from Po valley, and from there your
surname came.
Later I followed the emperor Conrad, and he
girt me with knighthood in his service, so much
favor had I gained from him by doing well.
Following him I marched against the
wickedness of that law whose people usurp,
through the fault of your shepherds, what is
justly yours.
There by that base folk I was disentangled
from the deceiving world, the love of which
defaces many souls,
and I came from martyrdom to this peace."

NOTES

1–12. A good will . . . of that other love: The collective will in the cross, an instrument of the divine will, ceases its singing to hear the pilgrim speak. Cf. *Mon*. 1.15.5: "Concord is a uniform movement of several wills"; see 20.1–30 and notes.

1–3. A good will . . . into a wicked will: Right love, or charity, "resolves itself" or flows [*si liqua*] into a benign will, and wrong love (cupidity) into a malignant one (see *Purg*. 17.91–139, 20.10–14 and notes).

4–6. imposed silence . . . loosens and tightens: Earlier spoken of as a harp and viol (see 14.118–20 and note), the cross is now a lyre whose strings (the singing souls) are imagined as sounded by the right hand (the will) of God. See Ps. 97.1–2, and Luke 1.51, "He has been strong in his right arm" (cf. 6.25–27, 4.43–45 and notes). For the harp as an image of Christ stretched out on the cross, see Heilbronn 1983 and note to *Inf*. 30.49–51, and Additional Note 8.

The instruments mentioned are those of psalmody (Ps. 150.3–4: "Praise him with psaltery and harp"). Also mentioned in the psalm (line 4) is the organ, which Dante brings in at 17.44 (see note). For David the psalmist [*cantor*], see 20.38, 25.72 and notes.

In *Conv*. 2.13.20–24 Dante compares the heaven of Mars to music, because its central position (fifth of nine spheres) means it expresses the "most beautiful relation" or proportion, that of 1:2, which generates a perfect consonance, the octave or diapason (see *Comm*. 2.1.4, 17). Dante's *poetry* here represents and embodies the three types of music in Boethius' *Institutio musica*: the "music of the spheres" (*musica mundana*), which the pilgrim first heard as he began his ascent (see 1.78 and note); that of the microcosm, the well-tempered mind and body (*musica humana*, here in the harmony of wills); and, in the metaphor of the lyre, instrumental music (*musica instrumentalis*; see Boethius 1867).

7–9. How could those substances . . . silent with one accord: Urging the pilgrim to speak out loud is a motif of the canto. Speech distinguishes the living man from the angels and blessed souls, who understand in God; see *DVE* 1.2–3.

10–12. It is well that he grieve . . . that other love: This pronouncement has repelled readers, though it is consistent with *Inferno*, and follows from lines 1–3: Dante underlines the consequences of choosing transient over enduring

values, a Boethian emphasis (cf. *Purg.* 8.76–81; *Par.* 17.134–35, 19.7–33 and notes).

13–148. As across a cloudless . . . to this peace: The balance of the canto relates the pilgrim's interview with a soul that descends from the cross. That this soul is the pilgrim's ancestor is implied by the echoes of Anchises in lines 25–27 and by other terms (lines 48, 52); the exact kinship is made explicit at lines 91–96, but the forerunner's name, Cacciaguida, though the pilgrim requests it (line 87), is deferred until line 135, after an account of Florence in the late eleventh century (lines 97–130).

13–26. As across a cloudless . . . he perceived his son: Implicitly, whoever descends from a cross has previously mounted it, like Christ (see lines 145–48, 14.106–108, 18.28–33 and notes).

13–18. As across . . . and it lasts but little: The descent of Cacciaguida from the cross is compared to a meteor (in Dante's understanding of astronomy, meteors were not falling stars but burning vapors in the atmosphere; comparing a meteor to a star is thus a metaphor). Lines 16–18 point to Ovid's account of the fall of Phaethon (*Met.* 2.319–22, esp. 321–22: "As sometimes from the cloudless sky of night / a star, though never falling, appears to fall"). The reference to Ovid's text is important later (cf. 17.1–3); see Additional Note 7.

19–24. so, from the horn . . . like fire behind alabaster: Placement in the right arm of the cross may especially honor some of those whose "strong right arm" (see note to lines 4–6) defended the faith. *Corno* also denotes the corner of an altar: the Cross was the altar on which Christ was sacrificed (see *Vexilla regis prodeunt*, line 29: "Hail, altar; hail, victim"; cf. *Inf.* 34.1 and note). Like the staves of the cross, the corners of the altar signify the quarters of the world reached by the Church (Durandus, *Rationale* 1.2.3).

25–27. So did the shade of Anchises . . . he perceived his son: The meeting of Aeneas with his father Anchises in the Elysian Fields is the central episode of Vergil's *Aeneid* (6.679–892). To prepare Aeneas for his historic mission, Anchises reveals to him the order of the cosmos and the future destiny of Rome; the meeting with Cacciaguida will prepare the pilgrim for his poetic mission to the world (see 17.13–99 and notes).

Though Dante draws on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* in this episode (see 14.97–99 and notes; also note to 22.133–53), where the younger Scipio, dreaming he is in the Milky Way, is told of his future by his adoptive grandfather,

Scipio Africanus the Elder, echoes of the *Aeneid* are given much greater prominence.

25. So did the shade of Anchises reach out devotedly: See *Aen*. 6.684–689:

> When he saw Aeneas coming toward him through the grass,
> he stretched out both palms [*palmas utrasque tetendit*] to his son,
> and with cheeks streaked with tears his voice broke from his mouth:
> "You have come at last [*venisti tandem*], the faith I knew in you has
> overcome your hard road" [*vicit iter durum pietas*].

Anchises' gesture (like Aeneas's attempted embrace; cf. *Aen*. 6.699–702, *Purg*. 2.79–81 and note) is impossible for a point of light (lines 13–16): the reader must supply the human image from Vergil's text. Cf. *Purg*. 26.94–96 and note.

26. if our greatest Muse deserves belief: Vergil's reputation as the greatest poet of Latinity is reaffirmed with the trope of cause for effect (the Muse in place of the author she inspires); cf. *Conv*. 4.26.8 ("our greatest poet") and *Mon*. 2.3.6 ("our divine poet Virgil"). Commentators read Dante's phrasing as suggesting Vergil's account of Aeneas's descent to Hades and Elysium might be a fiction. Whatever the status of Aeneas's journey (which Dante usually treats as historical; see *Inf*. 2.13 and note), all three parts of the *Comedy* have deep roots in the idea of a journey through the underworld and Elysium, in the wake of Aeneas (see Introduction, pp. 18–19).

27. when in Elysium he perceived his son: Elysium, whose location in Virgil's poem is ambiguous (it is entered from Hades, but has its own sun and stars; see *Aen*. 6.637–41), is a pleasance (*locus amoenus*), and the model, in Dante's poem, for Limbo in Hell (*Inf*. 4.24, 106 and notes), the valley of Princes (*Purg*. 6–8), and Eden (*Purg*. 28–30); see Rossi 1981.

28–42. O my blood . . . beyond the mark of mortals: Cacciaguida's speech includes Latin (lines 28–30), words unintelligibly lofty (46), the Italian in which the poem is written, archaic Florentine dialect (16.32–33), and easily intelligible prophetic utterance (17.31–36). The range of idiom exceeds that of any other speaker in the poem (cf. *Inf*. 26.73–75 and note, and *Purg*. 26.136–48 and notes).

28–30. O my blood . . . twice opened: An obvious answer might seem to be Paul, "rapt to the third heaven" before his death (Acts 9.3–9; see *Inf*. 2.28; *Par*. 1.4–6, 73–75 and notes; and *Ep*. 13.79). But the encomiastic form

of the question might imply that the answer is "no one." Has Cacciaguida forgotten Paul, or are the two ascents not fully comparable? See line 33 and note.

This, the sole terzina in the poem entirely in Latin, has liturgical resonance: the Church is Heaven's door [*porta celi*] in the dedication liturgy (after Gen. 28.10–18), and Heaven's gates [*ianüa celi*] open for the protomartyr Stephen in the text of his liturgy (see *Purg*. 15.106–14), an instance of how in the burial liturgy the door of justice may be opened at the request of the dead. All depend on the fact that at Easter both Hell and Heaven are opened by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross (cf. *Par*. 7.46–48 and note); this emphasis on the open door to heaven is related to Cacciaguida's status as the first of Dante's family to reach heaven (see 16.22–24 and note).

But the terzina also recalls the black gate of Hades in the *Aeneid*, open night and day [*nocte atque die patet atra ianua Ditis*, *Aen*. 6.127] through which Aeneas, like the pilgrim, is destined to pass twice [*bis*, *Aen*. 6.134–35], once in his journey and once after death. Cacciaguida's Latin fuses the epic exploit of Christ clearing the way of salvation for his followers with Aeneas's descent to the underworld and Elysium.

28. O my blood: Anchises' advice to Aeneas's descendant, Julius Caesar, is to cast away the weapons of the civil wars that led to dictatorship: "Proice telus, o sanguis meus" [throw down your weapons, O my blood], *Aen*. 6.835. The words also suggest that the pilgrim, descended from a knighted crusader, has, like Aeneas (whose lineage is established at *Mon*. 2.3.6–17), an ennobled bloodline (see note to line 140, 16.1–9 and note, and Additional Note 2).

34–36. for within her eyes . . . and my Paradise: The effect of Beatrice's smile appearing in her eyes concentrates past experience in the *VN* (2.5, 3.1); see also 18.19–21and *Conv*. 3.15.2, where Dante lists as "the greatest good of Paradise" the demonstrations of Wisdom (her eyes) and her persuasions (her smile).

33. I was amazed: The commentators refer to the amazement of the disciples at Pentecost when possessed of languages and of the companions of Paul when he answers an invisible Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts. 2.7–12, 9.6–7), as well as the Transfiguration (Mark 9.14); cf. also *Conv*. 4.25.5–6. Related instances are *Purg* 26.80, *Par*. 26.67.

37–42. Then joyous to hear . . . the mark of mortals: What kind of speech Cacciaguida uses here is debated; on the relation of human speech to the divine *Logos* or *Verbum* that transcends it, see 18.1, 3; 19.40–42 and notes; also

Conv. 3.4.11. But the ancestor's joy at the meeting (line 37) is audible and visible without the use of intelligible words (cf. 26.97–99 and note).

43–69. And when the arc . . . already decreed: Descending to intelligible speech (lines 43–45), Cacciaguida thanks the Trinity for granting his wish to see his descendant (46–54). Cacciaguida sees in God the pilgrim's desire to know his identity and the reason for his joy (lines 55–60), but urges the pilgrim to articulate the question audibly, to increase the charity of the exchange (61–69).

43–45. And when the arc . . . the target of our intellect: For the archery metaphor see also 1.118–26, 4.58–60, 26.24, 29.24 and notes. See also *Purg*. 16.47–48, 25.16–18 and notes, and Durling/Martinez 1990, Chapter 5.

46–49. the first thing understood . . . courteous to my seed: Cacciaguida's words blessing the Trinity are a doxology, like that concluding psalms when used liturgically. This transposition from the Latin liturgy, in the first part of the ancestor's speech to be intelligible, should be seen in relation to lines 28–30: Dante is revealing affinities between Latin and his Italian vernacular.

49–54. And he continued . . . your high flight: Heaven has no privations (see 32.52–54 and note), but this soul's joy at the pilgrim's visit suggests that history still brings fulfillment, even for the saints. The ancestor's attitude is based on *Aeneid* 6.687–88 (see note to line 25), but also on the expectation of the just in Limbo for the arrival of Christ, expressed in the Holy Thursday matins liturgy, itself modeled on Virgil's lines: "Advenisti, redemptor mundi" [you have come, redeemer of the world].

53–54. thanks to her . . . your high flight: Compare Boethius' Lady Philosophy:

> I will attach wings to your mind on which it can raise itself up; so that, all cares being driven away, you will with my guidance, on my path, and with my conveyances be able to return unhindered to your homeland (*Consol.* 4.pr.1.9).

This also echoes "O qui perpetua," 27–28. See also lines 70 and 81; for other high fliers with whom the pilgrim is compared, cf. *Inf*. 17.106–11 and note, and *Inferno* Additional Note 6. See Additional Note 1.

55–57. You believe that your thought . . . both five and six: The pilgrim's thought flows to Cacciaguida through God (First, or One). Five and six radiate

from the One where all numbers originate; it is like the center of a circle, from which the circumference (here, all human thought) is known (see *VN* 12.4). Five relates to Mars as the fifth sphere, six because it describes Florence, a human city (cf. *Inf*. 6.61, 16.76, *Purg*. 6.127–51, *Par*. 6.103–8, and the next canto).

61–69. You believe the truth . . . is already decreed: As in line 50, where he shows foreknowledge of the pilgrim's visit, Cacciaguida, reading the pilgrim's question in God's mind, has his answer prepared. Both in Mars and in Jupiter, the next planet, Dante confronts the problem of free will and God's foreknowledge (see *Consolatio* Books 4–5). On God as a mirror, see note to 3.21, 9.61–66, 13.58–60 and notes.

67. let your voice, sure bold, and glad: Further stimulus to speak. Cf. *Purg*. 32.103–5, 33.23–30 and notes; and see *Par*. 16.16–18, 17.127–35 and notes.

70–87. I turned to Beatrice . . . satisfy me with your name: Cacciaguida gazes on the first Equality (God); thus his understanding and love are in balance; not so for the pilgrim, whose affection for his ancestor (lines 82–84) does not yet include knowledge of his name.

73–78. Then I began thus . . . comparisons fall short: The implicit metaphor of scales balancing love and understanding is followed by the metaphor of the sun, whose heat (love) and light (wisdom) are inseparable but logically distinct (see 13.79–81, etc.). The central terzina of the canto turns on the metaphor of the balance (see line 75, "weight"), used earlier (cf. 4.138, 5.62, and 13.42 and notes). With its cross of light, Mars, fifth of nine planets, is the fulcrum of the cosmos. See Additional Note 8.

74. the first Equality appeared to you: "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like to him" (1 John 3.2). God is the "first Equality," both with respect to his own wisdom and power (see *Inf*. 3.95–96) and in the harmony of the three persons (see 10.1–3 and note). Commentators cite Hugh of St. Victor, *De trinitate* 6.21: "What a supreme equality must there be in that Trinity, where all must be equal and perfect."

79–81. But will and knowledge . . . feathered wings: Resuming the image of line 73, the two powers of the soul are imagined as wings (a variant on the idea of the two feet of the soul; see *Inf*. 1.30 and note). For this metaphor applied to an *Alighieri* (*alager* means "wing bearer"), see Shankland 1975.

85–87. But I beg you . . . satisfy me with your name: Like Folquet (see 9.69 and note), this soul is identified with a gem, here a topaz (usually blue or

tawny), set among the jewels of the planet (Dante's cross has been compared to jeweled crosses, or images of them, like the Latin cross of saint Apollinare in Classe, near Ravenna; see Schnapp 1986). Topaz was said to strengthen chastity; see Durling 1971.

88–148. O my branch . . . to this peace: The rest of the canto includes Cacciaguida's self-identification (88–96) and a social portrait of the twelfth-century Florence into which he was born and baptized (97–135); mention of his kinsmen and of his brief career as a crusader, conclude his tale (136–48).

88–96. O my branch . . . with your works: Cacciaguida reveals that his son, the pilgrim's great-grandfather, is in Purgatory, on the terrace of pride. Thus Cacciaguida is great-great-grandfather to the pilgrim; counting inclusively, five generations are spanned. Like the Donati (see 3.34–63, *Purg*. 23.48 and notes), kin to Dante through his wife, Gemma, the pilgrim has relatives in all three realms of the afterlife (cf. Geri del Bello, *Inf*. 29.25–27 and note). On pride as the family failing, see *Purg*. 13.138 and note.

88–90. Oh my branch . . . beginning of his reply: Cacciaguida echoes Is. 11.1 ("and there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower [*flos*] shall rise up out of his root [*radice*]"; see *Conv*. 4.5.5–6), and Matt. 3.17, God's approval of Christ at his baptism: "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased [*complacui*]." Implicit is the Jesse tree (Matt. 1.1–16; see *Purg*. 7.121 and note), showing how Jesus, son of Mary, springs from Jesse, father of David.

91–92. He from whom you take your name: Having a family name [*cognazion*] in medieval Florence was a mark of status (see Najemy 2006). But Dante's family was not especially notable (see *Inf*. 10.46–48 and note); see note to lines 79–81.

92. A hundred years and more: Dante's prideful great-grandfather (named Alighiero, like Dante's father) died, in this reckoning, toward the end of the twelfth century, though documentary evidence suggests he was still alive in 1201.

95–96. truly it will be fitting . . . labor with your works: Alighiero's stay in Purgatory can be abbreviated by the pilgrim (applicable to Dante's father as well, unless he is in Hell, cf. *Purg*. 23.85–90 and note; also *Purg*. 26.127–32 and note, of a poetic "father," Guinizelli). In a larger sense the poem is a work of devotion and sacrifice for others (see 17.124–42 and note, and Durling 1981a).

97–135. Florence within the ancient circle . . . a Christian and Cacciaguida: Old Florence is described in two similar sections, of five and six terzinas (lines 97–111, 112–129). Each begins with individuals (97–102: Florence as a woman;

112–14: Bellincione and his lady), then addresses families (103–5: daughters needing dowries; 115–20: wives content with distaffs, sure of burial places) and their habitations (106–8: houses emptied; 121–23: the nursery) and concludes with reference to cities (109–11: Florence overgrown; 124–26: Troy, Fiesole, and Rome). Implicit is the series of concentric governable entities: individuals and families, neighborhoods, and cities (see *Mon.* 1.3.2–4). Both sections conclude with a more general view of decay: the decline predicted of the city in relation to that of Rome (109–11); the unfavorable comparison with ancient virtue (127–29). Lines 130–35 summarize the account through the life of Cacciaguida.

97–111. Florence within the ancient circle . . . will be in declining: The five stanzas of the first section are articulated by anaphora, with "Not" beginning four consecutive terzinas: Dante's nine instances of *Non* (cf. the Ten Commandments: "Thou shalt not kill," Ex. 20.13), reiterate the word for nones [*Nona*] ending line 98 (cf. line 100, "*Non a*vea" [she had no]). Negations in series also characterize accounts of the peaceful Golden Age, as in Ovid, *Met.* 1.97–100: "No deep moats yet girt their cities; no straight trumpets, no curved brass horns, no helmets, no swords were there"; and cf. *Inf.* 13.1–9.

97–99. Florence within the ancient circle . . . sober and modest: The ancient Benedictine abbey (see 16.127–32 and note) marked with its bells the liturgical hours (tierce and nones, the office services sung at about 9 AM and 3 PM). The abbey was adjacent to the ancient walls, south of the old San Piero gate, the eastern gate of the city (for the other gates, see 16.103–5 and note). Like the "belt" of the city walls, the liturgical hours are a form of restraint, but their message is disregarded in Dante's Florence, as are all demographic or architectural limitations; new walls were built in 1178 and a larger circuit planned and begun before Dante was exiled (see plan, p. 301). On the "ancient circle" as a geometrical sign of the old city's perfection, see Mazzotta 1979.

100–102. She had no gold chain . . . than its wearer: Virtuous old Florence is personified as a woman who avoids rich ornament (note how the belt, whose symbolic function is to restrain, was later turned to ostentation). Compare personified Florence at *Purg.* 6.127–51 and notes (and see lines 113–14). Cf. also *Conv.* 1.10.12.

103–5. The daughter did not yet . . . these upward: In Dante's day a girl could be married only if provided with a large dowry. The measure is exceeded by a decline in the marriageable age in the one case, and by the increase in the dowry in the other; cf. other ratios at lines 109–11, 127–29.

105. did not yet flee the measure, those downward, these upward: The just measure as ethical principle was the basis of Aristotle's system of the virtues in his *Nichomachean Ethics* (5.3–5) each of which was thought to be the mean between vicious extremes; see *Conv*. 4.17.1–8, *Inf*. 7.40–42, our introduction to *Purgatorio*, pp. 8–10, and *Purg*. 22.38–44 and notes; see also Additional Note 8, and Martinez 1989.

106–8. There were no houses emptied . . . in a bedchamber: Houses were emptied for various reasons: because of political exile, because fathers traveled to France or the Holy Land, because very large palaces were built, or because the cost of child rearing discouraged procreation (consistent with lines 103–5). See note to lines 118–20.

107. Sardanapalus. A king of Assyria, famed for sexual excess (see Juvenal, *Satire* 10.362; Orosius, *Adversus paganos* 1.19). His five-syllable name is itself excessive.

112–17. Bellincion Berti I saw . . . the distaff: See 16.94–99 and note for Bellincione; for the Nerli, see 16.127–32. The Guelph del Vecchio house was expelled in 1248 and 1260. Though ancient and noble, these citizens went modestly clad; their women used no cosmetics and virtuously practiced spinning (cf. Prov. 31.19). Note terms for contained desires [*cinto*, *contento*].

118–29. O happy ladies . . . Cincinnatus or Cornelia: The focus returns to women in domestic settings (bed, cradle, household): their security assures family survival and the transmission of knowledge over generations.

118–20: O happy ladies . . . because of France: Florentine wives knew they would be buried where they were born because political exile was unknown and commercial travel still uncommon (see note to lines 106–8).

121–23. This one watched late . . . delights fathers and mothers: Close supervision of infants is accompanied by the "baby talk" parents themselves enjoy, a key stage in inculcating the vernacular that even women and infants could understand (cf. *DVE* 1.1.1). The "household" [*famiglia*] includes all souls that must be fed, including children, servants, and often slaves.

124–26. this other . . . of Fiesole and of Rome: Women transmit the founding narratives of Florence in the vernacular as they spin wool into thread (spinning is a metaphor for narrating; cf. Ovid, *Met*. 1.4, and note to 30.35).

126. of the Trojans, of Fiesole, and of Rome: The Troy story is the myth of the origins of European civilization (see *Inf*. 1.73–74, 5.64 and notes;

Mon. 2.3), that of Rome, founded by descendants of Trojan exiles, is the myth of Italian cultural prestige (*Conv.* 4.5.3–9; Florence was a "daughter" of Rome; *Conv.* 1.3.4). After long strife, Fiesole and its rough inhabitants (see *Inf.* 15.63 and note) were conquered by Florence in 1010, paving the way for its hegemony over Tuscany.

127–29. A Cianghella . . . Cincinnatus or Cornelia: Cornelia, the daughter of Scipio Africanus the elder, and mother of the populist reformers Tiberius and Gaius (the two Gracchi); and Cincinnatus, called from the plough to the dictatorship (see 6.46–47 and note, *Mon.* 2.5.9–10, *Conv.* 4.5.15), would be as exceptional for their virtue in the Florence of 1300 as Cianghella, a woman of ill repute said to have been the daughter of Arrigo della Tosa (d. 1330), and Lapo Salterello, a Florentine lawyer and judge banished in 1302 (along with Dante) for barratry (Compagni, *Cronica* 2.22), would have been exceptional for their vice in the days of Dante's ancestor. The "proportion" is chiastic, comparing ancients to moderns and moderns to ancients.

130–35. To so peaceful . . . a Christian and Cacciaguida: After describing the peaceful and virtuous city into which he was born, Cacciaguida names himself: one implication is that his virtues embody those of his city.

133. Mary gave me invoked with loud cries: Echoing the "loud cries" of Christ from the cross (11.32–33). Mary's name, invoked to relieve birth pangs, stands in for the name of Cacciaguida's mother, probably unknown to Dante.

135. at the same time a Christian and Cacciaguida: Delayed since line 87, Cacciaguida's name finally emerges. His christening follows closely on his birth, reflecting how baptism signified the birth of the soul into mother Church, the community of the saved (see also Cacciaguida's taking of the cross, line 140).

136–48. Moronto was my brother . . . to this peace: The choice of details in Cacciaguida's biography—his birth, his brothers' names, his descendants, his wife's origin, his friendship with the emperor and honor as a crusader, which leads to the journey that brings his death at the hands of enemies—follows an astrological scheme, derived from Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, that assigned to each of the twelve zodiacal signs a specific influence over the various ages, experiences, and relationships in life. See Additional Note 2.

136–38: Moronto was my brother . . . your surname came: Only this passage attests to these brothers, perhaps added by Dante to establish the connection

to the Elisei family; the early commentators record the presence of an Aldighieri family in Ferrara as early as the eleventh century. The prominence given Cacciaguida's mother and wife is consistent with lines 97–129.

139–41. Later I followed . . . by doing well: Existing documents about Cacciaguida do not call him a *dominus* [noble], though this status would have resulted from his being knighted by the emperor, for which there is likewise no record; nor do Cacciaguida's sons, Preitenitto and Alighiero, appear in registries as noble (*domini*). Yet by Dante's day the family was treated as noble: Dante rode with the knights at Campaldino (see note to *Inf.* 22.4–5) and was called *dominus* when on an embassy to San Gimignano in 1300 (Mattalia).

139. Later I followed the emperor Conrad: This is Conrad III of Swabia (emperor 1138–52), who entered Italy early in his reign to be crowned King of the Romans in Milan. Conrad II, the Salic, who fought the Saracens in southern Italy and knighted many Tuscans, has also been suggested, but he never went to the Holy Land. Conrad III is significant as the first of the Hohenstaufen rulers of Swabia, whose last descendants were Frederick II, Manfred, and Conradin (see *Purg.* 3.103–45 and note), and because the Guelph-Ghibelline divisions that were to divide Florence arose in Germany during his reign. Line 141 could be taken to mean that Conrad knew Cacciaguida before the crusade.

140. he girt me with knighthood in his service: In the knighting ceremony, the sponsor girds the new knight with his sword and other weaponry (see Durling/Martinez 1990, Appendix 1). Note the return to imagery of girdling and containment. Conferral of the *cingulum militiae* [belt] was a patent of knighthood, ennobling the family (see lines 139–41 and 16.1–9 and notes).

142–44: Following him I marched . . . what is justly yours: Dante's final pronouncement on the loss of the Holy Land (entirely in Islamic hands—"that law"—after the fall of Acre in 1291), recovery of which he felt the popes had neglected (line 143; see *Inf.* 27.87–90 and notes). Christians deemed Jerusalem Christ's legacy to his followers (as in Christian interpretation of Lam. 5.2, "Our inheritance is turned to aliens"; cf. *Purg.* 33.1–3 and notes). See *Ep.* 11.1–2, 4.

145–48. There by that base folk . . . to this peace: Cacciaguida's victory is that of the soul over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Crusaders who died in battle were regarded as martyrs; they fulfilled the example of Cross hymns (see 14.124–26 and note) by conquering with their deaths: the words of the

hymn *Pange lingua*, line 3, are *immolatus vicerit* [sacrificed, he vanquished], referring to Christ.

146–48. Disentangled from the deceiving world . . . to this peace: This passage repeats language and rhymes used in the heaven of the sun for Boethius (10.127–29 and notes), associating the poet's ancestor Cacciaguida with the author of one of the chief texts that shape *Paradiso*, also traditionally a Christian martyr.

145. There by that base folk: Italian *turpe* [base] was applied by Christian polemicists to Islam, who supposed it to promote sensual indulgence (allowing polygamy, for example); thus Dante refers to Islamic control of the Holy Land.

148. To this peace: What Anchises (and Vergil) wanted for Rome, and what, according to Dante and medieval tradition, Augustus gave the world (see 6.34–94, 79–81 and notes; and *Mon.* 1.16.2).

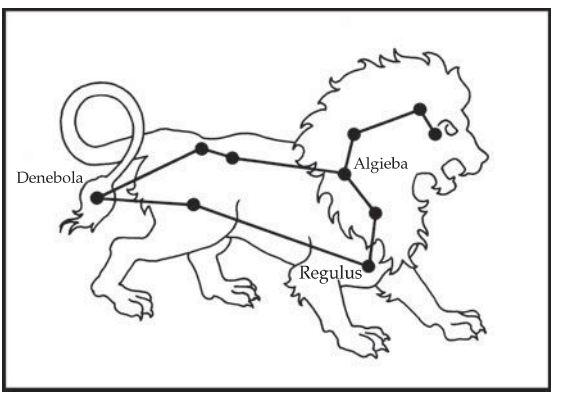

Figure 11. The constellation Leo

CANTO 16

O poca nostra nobiltà di sangue,
se glorïar di te la gente fai
qua giù, dove l'affetto nostro langue,
mirabil cosa non mi sarà mai,
ché là dove appetito non si torce,
dico nel cielo, io me ne glorïai.
Ben se' tu manto che tosto raccorce,
sì che se non s'appon di dì in die
lo tempo va dintorno con le force.
Dal *voi* che prima Roma sofferie,
in che la sua famiglia men persevra,
ricominciaron le parole mie,
onde Beatrice, ch'era un poco scevra,
ridendo, parve quella che tossio
al primo fallo scritto di Ginevra.
Io cominciai: "Voi siete il padre mio,
voi mi date a parlar tutta baldanza,
voi mi levate sì ch' i' son più ch' io.
Per tanti rivi s'empie d'allegrezza
la mente mia che di sé fa letizia
perché può sostener che non si spezza.
Ditemi dunque, cara mia primizia,
quai fuor li vostri antichi e quai fuor li anni
che si segnaro in vostra püerizia;
ditemi de l'ovil di San Giovanni
quanto era allora, e chi eran le genti
tra esso degne di più alti scanni."
Come s'avviva a lo spirar d'i venti
carbone in fiamma: così vid' io quella
luce risplendere a' miei blandimenti,

CANTO 16

Mars, continued: Cacciaguida's ancestors—the decline of Florence—new people and money—simplicity of the early Florentines

O our paltry nobility of blood, if you cause
people to glory in you down here, where our
affect is feeble,
it will never seem a wondrous thing to me, for
there where one's yearning cannot stray, I say in
Heaven, I gloried in you.
Truly you are a mantle that quickly shrinks,
and, if we do not add from day to day, time goes
around it with his shears.
With the *voi* that Rome first endured, in which
its descendants now least persevere, my words
began again,
so that Beatrice, a little apart and smiling,
resembled her who coughed at the first recorded
fault of Guinevere.
I began: "You are my father, you give me all
boldness to speak, you lift me up so high that I am
more than myself.
My mind is filled by gladness from so many
streams that it rejoices in its power to endure it
without being shattered.
Tell me then, my dear first harvest, who were
your ancestors, and what years were recorded in
your childhood;
tell me of the sheepfold of San Giovanni, how
large it was then, and who were the people there
worthy of the higher seats."
As in the breathing of the wind a coal livens in
the flames: so I beheld that light grow bright at
my blandishments,

e come a li occhi miei si fé più bella,
così con voce più dolce e soave,
ma non con questa moderna favella,
dissemi: "Da quel dì che fu detto 'Ave'
al parto in che mia madre, ch' è or santa,
s'alleviò di me, ond' era grave,
al suo Leon cinquecento cinquanta
e trenta fiate venne questo foco
a rinfiammarsi sotto la sua pianta.
Li antichi miei e io nacqui nel loco
dove si truova pria l'ultimo sesto
da quei che corre il vostro annüal gioco.
Basti d'i miei maggiori udirne questo:
chi ei si fosser e onde venner quivi
più è tacer che ragionare onesto.
Tutti color ch' a quel tempo eran ivi
da poter arme tra Marte e 'l Batista
erano il quinto di quei ch' or son vivi.
Ma la cittadinanza, ch' è or mista
di Campi, di Certaldo e di Fegghine,
pura vediesi ne l'ultimo artista.
Oh quanto fora meglio esser vicine
quelle genti ch' io dico, e al Galluzzo
e a Trespiano aver vostro confine,
che averle dentro e sostener lo puzzo
del villan d'Aguglion, di quel di Signa,
che già per barattare ha l'occhio aguzzo!
Se la gente ch' al mondo più traligna
non fosse stata a Cesare noverca,
ma come madre a suo figlio benigna,
tal fatto è fiorentino e cambia e merca
che si sarebbe vòlto a Simifonti,
là dove andava l'avolo a la cerca,
sariesi Montemurlo ancor de' Conti,
sarieno i Cerchi nel piovier d'Acone,
e forse in Valdigrieve i Buondelmonti.
Sempre la confusion de le persone
principio fu del mal de la cittade,
come del vostro il cibo che s'appone,

and as it became more beautiful in my eyes, so
with sweeter and gentler voice, but not in this
modern speech,
it said to me: "From the time when '*Ave*' was
spoken, to the birth whereby my mother, now
sainted, lightened herself of me, her burden,
this fire came five hundred, fifty, and thirty
times to its Lion, to be inflamed again beneath its
foot.
My ancestors and I were born where the last
ward is reached by one who runs in your annual
game.
Suffice it to hear this of my forebears: of who
they were and whence they came, it is more
fitting to be silent than to speak.
All those who in those times could bear arms,
between Mars and the Baptist, were a fifth of
those alive today.
But the population, now mixed with those from
Campi, from Certaldo, and from Figline, then was
pure to the last artisan.
Oh how much better to have as neighbors the
people of whom I speak, and to have your
boundaries at Galluzzo and Respiano,
than to have them inside the limits, and to
endure the stench of the peasant from Aguglione
or from Signa, who already sharpens his eye to swindle!
If the people who are most degenerate in the
world had not been a step-mother to Caesar, but
kindly, as a mother toward her son,
such a one has become a Florentine and
changes money and sells, who would have
returned to Simifonti, where his grandfather went begging,
Montemurlo would still belong to the Counts,
the Cerchi would be in the parish of Acone, and
perhaps in Valdigrieve the Buondelmonti.
The mixing together of persons has ever been
the beginning of harm to the city, as excessive
food is cause of your diseases,

e cieco toro più avaccio cade
che cieco agnello, e molte volte taglia
più e meglio una che cinque spade.
Se tu riguardi Luni e Orbisaglia
come sono ite, e come se ne vanno
di retro ad esse Chiusi e Sinigaglia,
udir come le schiatte si disfanno
non ti parrà nova cosa né forte,
poscia che le cittadi termine hanno.
Le vostre cose tutte hanno lor morte,
sì come voi, ma celasi in alcuna
che dura molto, e le vite son corte.
E come 'l volger del ciel de la luna
cuopre e discuopre i liti sanza posa,
così fa di Fiorenza la Fortuna:
per che non dee parer mirabil cosa
ciò ch' io dirò de li alti Fiorentini
onde è la fama nel tempo nascosa.
Io vidi li Ughi e vidi i Catellini,
Filippi, Greci, Ormanni e Alberichi
già nel calare, illustri cittadini,
e vidi così grandi come antichi,
con quel de la Sannella, quel de l'Arca,
e Soldanieri e Ardinghi e Bostichi.
Sovra la porta ch' al presente è carca
di nova fellonia di tanto peso
che tosto fia iattura de la barca,
erano i Ravignani, ond' è disceso
il conte Guido, e qualunque del nome
de l'alto Bellincion ha poscia preso.
Quel de la Pressa sapeva già come
regger si vuole, e avea Galigaio
dorata in casa sua già l'elsa e 'l pome.
Grand' era già la colonna del vaio,
Sacchetti, Giuochi, Fifanti e Barucci
e Galli, e quei ch'arrossan per lo staio.
Lo ceppo di che nacquero i Calfucci
era già grande, e già eran tratti
a le curule Sizii e Arrigucci.

and a blind bull falls sooner than a blind lamb,
and many times one sword cuts more and better
than five.
If you look at Luni and Orbisaglia, how they
have gone to ruin, and how Chiusi and Sinigaglia
are following in their wake,
to hear that lineages perish will not seem a
strange thing or difficult, since cities have their
end.
The things of your world all have their deaths,
just as you do, but in some it is hidden, for they
last a long time, and lives are short.
And as the turning of the heaven of the moon
covers and uncovers the shores without pause,
so Fortune does with Florence:
thus what I say of the noble Florentines whose
fame is hidden in antiquity, should not seem
wondrous.
I saw the Ughi and I saw the Catellini, Filippi,
Greci, Ormanni, and Alberichi, illustrious citizens,
already in decline,
and I saw, still as great as they were ancient,
de l'Arca with de la Sannella, and the Soldanieri
and Ardinghi and Bostichi.
Over the gate now burdened with wickedness
of such weight that soon the bark must be lost,
dwelt the Ravignani, from whom Count Guido
descends and whoever later took his name from
the noble Bellincione.
De la Pressa already knew how to rule, and
Galigaio already had gilded hilt and pommel in
his house.
Already great were the column of vair, the
Sacchetti, Giuochi, Fifanti and Barucci and Galli,
and those who blush for the bushel.
The stock from which the Calfucci were born
was already great, and already the Sizii and
Arrigucci had been called to curule thrones.

Oh quali io vidi quei che son disfatti
per lor superbia! e le palle de l'oro
fiorian Fiorenza in tutt' i suoi gran fatti.
Così facieno i padri di coloro
che, sempre che la vostra chiesa vaca,
si fanno grassi stando a consistoro.
L'oltracotata schiatta che s'indraca
dietro a chi fugge, e a chi mostra 'l dente
o ver la borsa com' agnel si placa,
già venìa sù, ma di picciola gente,
sì che non piacque ad Ubertin Donato
che poï il suocero il fé lor parente.
Già era il Caponsacco nel mercato
disceso giù da Fiesole, e già era
buon cittadino Giuda e Infangato.
Io dirò cosa incredibile e vera:
nel picciol cerchio s'entrava per porta
che si nomava da quei de la Pera.
Ciascun che de la bella insegna porta
del gran barone il cui nome e 'l cui pregio
la festa di Tommaso riconforta
da esso ebbe milizia e privilegio,
avvegna che con popol si rauni
oggi colui che la fascia col fregio.
Già eran Gualterotti e Importuni,
e ancor saria Borgo più quïeto
se di novi vicin fosser digiuni.
La casa di che nacque il vostro fleto,
per lo giusto disdegno che v'ha morti,
e puose fine al vostro viver lieto,
era onorata, essa e suoi consorti:
o Buondelmonte, quanto mal fuggisti
le nozze süe per li altrui conforti!
Molti sarebber lieti che son tristi,
se Dio t'avesse conceduto ad Ema
la prima volta ch'a città venisti,
ma conveniesi a quella pietra scema
che guarda 'l ponte che Fiorenza fesse
vittima ne la sua pace postrema.

109 Oh how great they seemed to me, those who
have been undone by their pride! and the golden
balls made Florence flourish in all her great deeds.
112 Such were the fathers of those who, whenever
your church is vacant, make themselves fat in
consistory.
115 The presumptuous clan that is like a dragon
against those who flee, but is placated like a
lamb by those who show their teeth or their purse,
118 was already coming up, but from lowly folk, so
that Uberto Donato was not pleased when his
father-in-law made him a relative of theirs.
121 Already Caponsacco had come down from
Fiesole to the market-place, and already Giuda
and Infangato were good citizens.
124 I will say a thing incredible but true: one
entered into the little circle of walls through a gate
that took its name from the Pera family.
127 All who wear the lovely emblem of the great
baron whose name and praise adorn the feast of
Thomas
130 from him had knighthood and privilege, though
today he who adorns it with the fringe gathers
with the commoners.
133 Already there were the Gaulterotti and the
Importuni, and Borgo would still be tranquil if they
lacked new neighbors.
136 The house from which your weeping came
because of the just anger that has killed you all
and put an end to your happy living,
139 was honored, along with its consorts: O
Buondelmonte, how ill you fled marriage with
it at others' urgings!
142 Many would now be glad who mourn, if God
had given you to the Ema the first time you came
to the city,
145 but it was necessary that Florence, in her last
peace, should offer a victim to that broken stone
that guards the bridge.

Con queste genti, e con altre con esse,
vid' io Fiorenza in sì fatto riposo
che non avea cagione onde piangesse.
Con queste genti vid' io glorïoso
e giusto il popol suo tanto che 'l giglio
non era ad asta mai posto a ritroso
né per divisïon fatto vermiglio."

With these folk, and others along with them,
did I see Florence in such repose that she had no
cause to make her weep.
With these folk I saw her people so glorious
and just that the lily had never been reversed
upon the staff
nor made scarlet by division."

NOTES

1–9. O our paltry nobility . . . around it with its shears: The pilgrim glories in the noble ancestry deriving from Cacciaguida's knighthood, though he also acknowledges, after his authorities (Juvenal, *Satires* 8.1–20; *Consol.* 3.pr.6.1–2) and his own stated views (see *Conv.* 4.20.5, *Mon.* 2.3.4), that nobility of individual character is primary. Like some earlier passages (see *Purg.* 8.121–39, on the Malaspina), the cantos in Mars foreground the leading role noble families might play in Italian politics (see 17.70–93, and Carpi 2004).

7–9. Truly, you are a mantle . . . around it with its shears: The sumptuary laws that dictated the garments Florentine citizens might wear defined this mantle as suited to the class of knights, thus to the nobility. But nobility will erode over time unless it is renewed by good deeds; cf. *Conv.* 4.20.3–5, 4.29.6–11; and the attacks on degraded houses at *Purg.* 7.91–136, 121–23; 14.91–123 and notes.

10–27. With the *voi* . . . the higher seats: Knowledge of his ancestry (lines 16–18, 22) and Cacciaguida's account of old, virtuous Florence encourage the pilgrim to pose further questions (lines 22–28; cf. 15.67–69). Anaphora on *voi*, the second-person-plural honorific form (lines 16–18), elevates the pilgrim's language, reflecting his social elevation and his sense of restoring an ancient Roman dignity (lines 10–12).

10–12. With the *voi* . . . words began again: Lucan attributes changes in Roman protocol to Caesar's assumption of the dictatorship (see *Phar.* 5.383–86: "all the lying titles that we have used so long to our masters"), including use of the plural *vos* to address an individual; but contemporary Rome, left desolate by emperors and popes (see *Purg.* 6.112–14 and notes, *Ep.* 11.21) has abandoned the practice. *Voi* was used in *Inferno* to Farinata and Cavalcante (10.51, 63, and *passim*) and Brunetto Latini (15.80), and in *Purgatorio* to Currado Malaspina (8.121), Hadrian V (19.131), and Guido Guinizelli (26.112), and in both *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* to Beatrice (but see *Par.* 31.80–90 and note, and Additional Note 1).

13–15. so that Beatrice . . . fault of Guinevere: Beatrice witnesses the pilgrim's somewhat vainglorious pleasure in his family's nobility; she stands apart, marking her dissociation from the fault; but smiles, showing her indulgence of it.

In the Old French *Lancelot* (8.52a.108), the Lady of Malehault escorts Arthur's Queen Guinevere to an assignation with the knight Lancelot; the lady, who had once loved Lancelot, coughs when Guinevere asks the knight to describe how he first fell in love with her: it is the "first fault" of the queen because her question opens the way for her adulterous affair (see *Inf.* 5.127–38 and notes).

16–18. I began . . . more than myself: Cacciaguida is the fifth of those addressed by the pilgrim or poet as fathers in the poem, in addition to Virgil, Brunetto (*Inf.* 15.83), Guinizelli (*Purg.* 26.97), and Apollo (see 1.28), with four to follow (see 22.58, 24.62, 26.91–93, 31.63). Cacciaguida, the only blood relative among them, raises the pilgrim's self-esteem. See note to lines 7–9.

22–24. Tell me then . . . in your childhood: The pilgrim's question recalls Farinata's interrogation of the pilgrim (*Inf.* 10.42, 46–48). In line 22 *primizia* [first harvest fruits] identifies Cacciaguida as the first of Dante's family to reach Heaven (see 15.91–93 and note), in the wake of 1 Cor. 15.20: "But now Christ is risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that sleep" [*primitiae dormientium*]. For the assembled blessed as a harvest, see 23.19–21 and note.

25–27. tell me of the sheepfold . . . the higher seats: As patron of Florence (see *Inf.* 13.143–50), the Baptist cares for the city as his sheepfold (see 25.5–6 and note); John also recognized Christ as "Lamb of God" (John 1.36).

28–154. As in the breathing . . . made scarlet by division: In the balance of the canto, the pilgrim's questions (lines 22–27) are answered by Cacciaguida, who gives the year of his birth (lines 34–40), names his family and their residence (lines 40–45), numbers the city's inhabitants (lines 46–48), adds a comment on the effects of immigration from the countryside (lines 49–87), and then lists the most important families (lines 88–147). In his words the vanished era of honor, moderation, and courtesy reproaches the new world of sudden wealth (cf. *Inf.* 16.67–69; *Purg.* 16.121–26, 134 and notes).

32–33. so with sweeter . . . not in this modern speech: Leaving off his Latin speech (15.28–30), Cacciaguida appears to speak in old Florentine dialect, which, given the passage of more than a century, would differ from Dante's own, according to Dante's own theories (cf. 26.124–32, which represents a change in Date's earlier views: *Conv.* 1.5.9 and *DVE* 1.9.6–8). The words "sweet and gentle" were used of Beatrice's speech to Virgil (*Inf.* 2.56–57 and note).

34–39. it said to me . . . beneath its foot: Cacciaguida records, in terms of the returns of Mars to the zodiacal sign of the Lion, the number of years elapsed

from the Annunciation, March 25, when Gabriel saluted Mary with *Ave* (see *Purg.* 10.34–45, notes on *Par.* 26.114, and 32.112–13), to the year of his birth. According to the astronomer Alfraganus, Mars makes a complete revolution around the sun in 687 days; 687 multiplied by 580, divided by the number of days in a solar year, 365 and a fraction, yields 1091 as the year of Cacciaguida's birth. The second crusade, where he met his death (15.145–46) began in 1147, so by this reckoning he lived fifty-six years. Calculations using different values for the period of Mars are less convincing. Dante was also in his fifty-sixth year when he died.

37–39. this fire . . . beneath its foot: Ptolemy records Regulus, the principal star in Leo (*cor leonis*), as strengthening courage, akin to the effect of Mars. With his mention of the Annunciation, which also marked the Florentine New Year, Cacciaguida implies the horoscope of the city, supposed refounded on that date by Charlemagne in 801, with Mars and Mercury as principal influences (see *Inf.* 13.143–50 and notes, Villani 4.1). Cacciaguida's own birth was probably "under Mars": *Martius*, the Roman month of March, was sacred to Mars, and the sign Aries, traversed by the sun from 13 March to 13 April (according to the Julian calendar)is one of the houses of Mars; Mars never entered Leo in 1091, however (data from Tuckerman 1964).

40–42. My ancestors . . . your annual game: Cacciaguida locates the houses of his ancestors at the beginning of the Porta San Piero quarter, where the modern Via degli Speziali and Via Calimala intersect, thus at the place where the axes of the ancient Roman surveying plan (*cardo maximus*, *decumanus*) form a cross (see 14.100–102 and note). The "annual game" is the *palio*, the horse race run on Saint John's day (June 24; cf. *Inf.* 15.121, 124 and notes), from outside Porta San Brancazio, the western gate, through the city to the church of San Pier Maggiore, near Porta San Piero, the eastern gate. The San Piero *sesto* [sixth] was the "last ward" because, as the source of the greatest number of knights in the Florentine force, it entered battle after the others (Villani, 4.2). Cacciaguida resided in the quarter with the greatest density of knights from the oldest families. For Florentine place names, see plan, p. 301.

40. My ancestors: Commentators suggest that Dante claims parentage here with the old Roman family of the Elisei (see 15.136 and note); he does appear to have identified with the prophet Elisha, Eliseo in Italian (4 Kings 2.7–14; see *Inf.* 26.34–39 and note). For the pilgrim's old Roman origins, see *Inf.* 15.76–77 and note.

46–72. All those who in those times . . . better than five: Cacciaguida traces the decline of Florentine mores to the overpopulation of an uncouth peasantry

and factious aristocracy from towns and fortresses all over Tuscany. Compare *Inf.* 15.61–62, 76–77 and notes, where Florentine degeneracy is attributed to the mixture of uncouth Fiesolans with an earlier Roman stock.

46–51. All those who in those times . . . pure to the last artisan: Immigration from nearby Tuscan towns (Campi to the north, Certaldo to the south, Figline to the east) has diluted bloodlines that ran pure through Florentine society down to the class of manual workers. The population that could bear arms in Cacciaguida's day was one-fifth of all those living in Florence in Dante's; as Villani (9.39) gives thirty thousand as the city's population in 1300, this suggests some six thousand capable of arms in Cacciaguida's day; if instead Cacciaguida means one fifth of all souls capable of arms in 1300, the number is only two thousand.

51. artisan. As probably the first writer to use the word *artista* in his vernacular, Dante affirms the broadly based dignity of craft in applying it to Nature and skilled craftsmen (13.77), to himself (30.33), and to humbler workers in the "mechanical" arts, as here; see also 32.139–41 and note.

47. between Mars and the Baptist: The baptistery to the north and the statue of Mars on the south, placed on the city side of the Ponte Vecchio mark the northern and southern city limits (see plan, p. 301). The Baptist and his baptistery stand for Florence (see lines 25 and 42, 15.134 and note); the baptistery is also a focal point for Cacciaguida (15.134 and note) and for the poet (25.1–12 and notes). Like the chronicler Villani (2.5), Dante believed the baptistery to have been a Roman temple of Mars later converted to Christian use. The shift of the city's patron to the Baptist gave rise to the superstition that the city's violence resulted from the offense to the pagan deity (see *Inf.* 13.143–50 and note).

56–57. the peasant from Aguglione . . . sharpens his eye to swindle: Two jurists with roles in Dante's exile are here satirized: one is Baldo d'Aguglione, condemned for theft of public funds in 1299 (see *Purg.* 12.105 and note), who helped compile the *Ordinamenti di giustizia* in 1293 (see our introduction to *Inferno*, p. 8) and promoted the decree granting amnesty to the Whites (1311), excepting those, like Dante, suspected of Ghibellinism; the other is Fazio dei Morubaldini of Signa, who switched from the Whites to the Blacks "to do ill," as Compagni reports (*Cronica* 2.23). As the Florentine ambassador to Clement V, Fazio fostered resistance to Henry VII in 1311 (see 30.133–38 and note).

58–63. If the people . . . his grandfather went begging: If the papacy and clergy had cooperated with imperial governance in Italy, rather than resisting

(see *Purg.* 6.76–151 and notes), impoverished rustics would not have come to Florence to engage in sharp practice. Commentators see a reference to Lippo Velluti, one of a family of money changers and merchants from Simifonti, and part of the government that expelled Giano della Bella in 1295 (see note to lines 131–32).

59. a stepmother to Caesar: The stepmother [*noverca*] mixing poisons typifies the violent Iron Age in Ovid's account of the four ages (*Met.* 1.127–50, esp. 147; see *Inferno* Additional Note 3); cf. 17.47, the sole other use of *noverca* in the poem.

64–66. Montemurlo . . . the Buondelmonti: In 1219 and again in 1254 the Counts Guidi ceded their fortress of Montemurlo (between Prato and Pistoia) to the Florentines because they could not hold it against the Pistoians; the low-born Cerchi from nearby Acone migrated to Florence, became wealthy and, as leaders of the White Guelphs, became rivals of the Donati, leaders of the Blacks; the Buondelmonti of Valdigrieve moved to Florence when they lost Montebuono Castle in 1135. For Dante, the city's rapid growth, the expropriations of the country nobility, and the feuds between families newly settled in the city and newly enriched were aggravated by the conflict between the Holy Roman Empire and the Church (see *Purg.* 6.91–92, 97–102 and notes).

67–70. The mixing together of persons . . . your diseases: Compare Aristotle, *Politics* 5.3: "Most of the states which have admitted persons of another stock, either at the time of their foundation or later, have been troubled by sedition." Excess food in the body causes indigestion, an analogy for civil broils; see *Inf.* 6.49–51 and note, and *Inferno* Additional Notes 2 and 13. "Confusion" in line 67 implies that Dante's Florence is a new Babel; see Mazzotta 1979.

73–87. If you look at Luni . . . should not seem wondrous: Five terzinas at the heart of the canto (the midpoint is at line 78; see 15.73–78 and note) outline the decline of cities (73–75), of lineages (76–78), and of all sublunar things, which change under the influence of the heavens, here signified by the moon (82–84), associated with Fortune and mutability (see *Inf.* 7.73–90; *Inf.* 15.46–48, 93; *Par.* 3.31–130 and notes). Decay goes unperceived because it spans more than a single human generation (79–81; cf. *DVE* 1.9.6–8).

73–75. If you look at Luni . . . are following in their wake: The old Etruscan city of Luni, in Lunigiana at the border of Tuscany and Liguria, was desolate in Dante's day after being sacked by Saracens (see *Inf.* 20.47 and note), as was Orbisaglia, a Roman city in the marches, destroyed by Visigoths. Etruscan

Chiusi, (ancient Clusium), in the swampy Chiana valley (see *Inf.* 29.46), and Roman Sinigaglia (in Romagna), declined in the Middle Ages but were later reinhabited. The cities suggest a distant outer ring around Florence.

82–84. And as the turning . . . Fortune does with Florence: This reference evokes the image for the succession of time as wave after wave in Ovid, *Met.* 15.179–85. Modern Florence is vulnerable to the tides of Fortune because she lacks the civic virtue that defended Cacciaguida's Florence (see 15.97–135 and notes). In "without pause" [*sanza posa*] there is an echo of *Purg.* 6.150 ("cannot find rest [*posa*]"), which decries the inconstancy of Florence. For other alliteration on the city's name, see lines 111 and 149; the city is named six times in Mars (15.97; here; 16.111, 146, 149; 17.48).

88–147. I saw the Ughi . . . that guards the bridge: To answer the pilgrim's question (lines 26–27), and illustrate the principle in lines 73–87, Cacciaguida lists old families, many of which he treats as extinct or unimportant by Dante's day (most in fact survived, under different names, by shifting allegiance to the guild party, the *Popolo*; see Carpi 2004). Packing some forty proper names into sixty lines recalls the vernacular *serventese*, used for satirical and encomiastic themes: Dante says in *VN* 6.2 that he wrote one listing sixty Florentine women. Anchises' display for Aeneas of Rome's future progeny, from which Dante drew for his negligent princes (see *Purg.* 7.88–89 and notes) is also relevant: for Rome, as for Dante's Florence, civil broils cast a pall over civic success.

88–99. I saw the Ughi . . . the noble Bellincione: In the dozen names of his first list, Cacciaguida contrasts six families extinct or declined in his day, with six ancient families still important. Restatement of Bellincione's nobility, closing the list, is part of Cacciaguida's rhetorical organization; see 15.112–14 and note.

88–89. I saw the Ughi . . . Ormanni, and Alberichi: The Ughi and Catellini dwelled near the western Porta San Brancazio (or Pancrazio); the latter, Ghibellines, were expelled in 1258 and 1268; repatriated after 1280, they were kept from high office because they were not enrolled in a guild [*arte*]. The Guelph Ormanni, from the Porta Santa Maria district, later joined the White faction as the Foraboschi. The Alberichi lived in the Porta San Piero district, to the east; Boccaccio relates as traditionally Florentine a tale of Federigo degli Alberighi (*Decameron* 5.9).

92–93. De l'Arca . . . and Ardinghi and Bostichi: The de l'Arca and Soldanieri, Ghibellines from San Brancazio ward, were penalized by Charles of Valois in

1302 (Gianni de' Soldanieri is in Dante's Cocytus; see *Inf.* 32.121 and note). The Sannella dwelled near the Mercato Nuovo, the city center, as did the Bostichi, Guelphs who fled after Montaperti (1260; see *Inf.* 10.32, 85–87 and notes), and who sided with both Whites and Blacks during factional fighting after 1300. The Ardinghi were from the Porta San Piero quarter.

94–99. Over the gate . . . the noble Bellincione: After naming eleven families in six lines, Cacciaguida devotes the next six to the Ravignani, whose houses adjoined the Porta San Piero, and who, through marriage with a daughter of Bellincion Berti (see *Inf.* 16.37–38 and note), gave rise to the several branches of the Conti Guidi; their houses were taken over by the Cerchi, here left unmentioned (see note to lines 64–66, *Inf.* 6.64–72 and note).

94–96. Over the gate . . . the bark must be lost: The moral evil of the Cerchi is a weight that will sink the city, imagined as the ship of state (see *Inf.* 22.7–18, 53–54; *Purg.* 6.77 and notes; *Conv.* 4.4. 5–7). Emphasis falls not only on families, but on Porta San Piero as the principal eastern gate, the city's gate of Paradise, on which the sun rises; cf. 11.46–47 and note.

100–120. De la Pressa already knew . . . a relative of theirs: As in lines 88–99, a dozen families in decline are listed in nine lines, followed by a dozen lines given to five clans so infamous they are left unnamed. The early fame and misdeeds of the first group anticipate the haughtiness shown by those in the second; as in lines 88–99, the half dozen is capped with a worthy man, Uberto Donato.

100–108. De la Pressa already knew . . . curule thrones: This group of a dozen families is articulated with five uses of *già* [already], emphasizing their rise on Fortune's turning wheel. See note to lines 121–35.

100–102. De la Pressa already knew . . . pommel in his house: The de la Pressa, Ghibellines from Porta del Duomo, were expelled in 1258; Villani (7.78) associates them with the Abati traitors of Montaperti (see *Inf.* 32.80–81 and note). The Ghibelline Galigai from Porta San Piero, whose gilded sword pommel signifies their knightly rank, were also expelled in 1258 because of crimes committed by a family member; their houses were demolished in 1293 as provided by the *Ordinamenti di giustizia* (see Compagni, *Cronica* 1.12).

103–5. Already great . . . blush for the bushel: The Pigli, from Porta San Brancazio, became Ghibellines in 1215, but later identified with the Whites; their colors showed a vertical stripe of vair (the fur of the Eurasian grey

squirrel; cf. *Inf.* 11.115 and note), bisecting a vermilion field. The Sacchetti, from San Pier Scheraggio, joined the Guelphs and fled to Lucca after Montaperti; the writer Franco Sacchetti (1335–1400) was of this family. The Giuochi were from Porta San Piero; the Fifanti, expelled in 1258, and the Galli were Ghibellines from Porta Santa Maria; the Barucci from Porta del Duomo. This group includes families from all the old quarters named after the four original city gates.

105. and those who blush for the bushel: The Chiaramontesi family held the salt monopoly; Donato Chiaramontesi tampered with the salt measure for the sake of profit (see *Purg.* 12.103–5 and note, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 8).

106–8. The stock . . . curule thrones: The Calfucci were an extinct branch of the Donati, a family Dante avoids naming, given their role in civic faction; cf. *Inf.* 6.67–72, *Purg.* 24.76 and notes). The Guelph Sizii and Arrigucci from Porta del Duomo had attained important offices, marked by reference to the folding chair of ancient Roman magistrates. Dante had probably read Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 1.8, tracing use of the chair to the kings of Etruria—that is, Tuscany. Its medieval equivalent, the faldstool, was used by traveling bishops.

109–11. Oh how great . . . all her great deeds: A pair of Ghibelline families are identified in these lines: the proud Uberti from Porta San Piero (cf. *Inf.* 10.49–51, 82–87 and notes); and the Lamberti from the Porta San Brancazio, whose coat of arms depicted golden balls in a blue field. Both families were proscribed; after Benevento (1266) the houses of the Uberti were destroyed, making way for the present Piazza della Signoria (see *Inf.* 23.105–8 and note).

112–14. Such were the fathers . . . fat in consistory: These lines refer to the Visdomini and the related Tosinghi, Guelphs of Porta San Piero, expelled after Montaperti, later allied with the Black Guelphs. As patrons of the episcopal see, they garnished its revenues whenever no bishop occupied the seat. "Consistory" is used ironically to suggest swinish feeding at the trough rather than the ceremonies customary at such gatherings (see *Purg.* 9.22–27 and note).

115–20. The presumptuous clan . . . a relative of theirs: This group culminates with an allusion to the Adimari, Guelphs from Porta San Piero; expelled in 1248 and again after Montaperti, most members later joined the Whites. According to the commentators, Filippo Argenti (see *Inf.* 8.61 and note), a member of the Cavicciuli branch, associated with the Blacks; his brother

received Dante's property, confiscated after the poet's exile. Cacciaguida treats them as low-born, but socially rising after marriage to a sister-in-law of Ubertino Donato, who had married into the illustrious Ravignani clan (see line 97).

115–17. The presumptuous clan . . . or their purse: The clan's pride, cowardice, and avarice merit harsh alliteration and rhymes (on *-aca*; cf. 27.23–27 and note) and the vivid coinage *s'indraca* [endragons itself] in line 115.

121–35. Already Caponsacco . . . new neighbors: The last group consists of six families named and six implied (again articulated with *già*; see lines 118, 121, 133), who swelled the immigration Cacciaguida deplores (see lines 67–69). The Buondelmonti (line 135) make thirteen (see *Inf.* 28.106 and notes).

121–23. Already Caponsacco . . . were good citizens: The Caponsacchi [Head in the bag] migrated from "stony" Fiesole (cf. *Inf.* 15.63 and note) to the Mercato Vecchio in the Porta San Piero; Ghibellines, they expelled the Guelphs in 1244, were in turn exiled in 1258, and after 1280 joined the Whites, to be expelled again in 1302. The Giudi [Judases], from San Pier Scheraggio, were consuls in the twelfth century and as Ghibellines were driven out in 1258, returning after Montaperti to be forced out again in 1268; they were excluded from high office when declared magnates in 1293. The Ghibelline Infangati [Muddied ones] from San Pier Scheraggio near the Mercato Nuovo were exiled in 1258. At once historical and fanciful, the names may imply poetic judgments.

124–26. I will say a thing . . . from the Pera family: That a gate in the oldest walls was named after the Peruzzi attests to their antiquity.

127–32. All who wear . . . with the commoners: The great baron is Hugh of Brandenburg, marquis of Tuscany from 961 to 1001, son of Uberto, marquis of Tuscany, and Countess Willa, who founded the Badia of Florence in 978, where Hugh was later buried. Hugh knighted the Giandonati, Pulci, Nerli, Gangalandi, Alepri, and della Bella, and allowed them to quarter into their colors Hugh's arms, seven red and white vertical staves. His death was commemorated on December 21, the feast of Thomas the Apostle.

131–32. though today he who adorns it . . . with the commoners: The family of Giano della Bella, who curbed the political participation of the magnates with the *Ordinamenti di giustizia* of 1293, thus siding with the guild party or commoners [*Popolo*], adorned its coat of arms with a gold fringe.

133–35. Already there were the Gualterotti . . . lacked new neighbors: The Guelph Gualterotti and Importuni lived in Borgo Santi Apostoli, which would have remained tranquil had new families not moved there. In 1311, both families were excluded from city magistracies. For the image of fasting, see 15.49 and note.

136–47. The house . . . that guards the bridge: Among new neighbors to be regretted (see line 66) was Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti: after he spurned his Amidei bride for a daughter of the Donati, he was murdered by the Amidei near the statue of Mars on his wedding day, Easter Sunday of 1215, sparking hostilities between Guelphs and Ghibellines (Villani 6.38; see *Inf.* 28.106 and note).

148–54. With these folk . . . made scarlet by division: Cacciaguida's Florence was peaceful, victorious, and just; the last three lines show how all was lost. Since the lily symbolizes justice (see 20.1–21 and note), the reversed-lily standard is a sign of injustice as well as defeat, as after Montaperti. After the Guelph victory in 1266, the city's Ghibelline device, the white lily on a red field, became a red lily on a white field, as if bloodied by civil war. The division manifest in the city's heraldry reverses the meaning of the *tondo*, whose four sections are joined, not divided, by the arms of the cross (see 14.101–3).

CANTO 17

Qual venne a Climenè, per accertarsi
di ciò ch' avëa incontro a sé udito,
quei ch' ancor fa li padri ai figli scarsi:
tal era io, e tal era sentito
e da Beatrice e da la santa lampa
che pria per me avea mutato sito.
Per che mia donna: "Manda fuor la vampa
del tuo disio," mi disse, "sì ch'ella esca
segnata bene de la interna stampa,
non perché nostra conoscenza cresca
per tuo parlare, ma perché t'ausi
a dir la sete, sì che l'uom ti mesca."
"O cara piota mia, che sì t'insusi
che, come veggion le terrene menti
non capere in trïangol due ottusi,
così vedi le cose contingenti
anzi che sieno in sé, mirando il punto
a cui tutti li tempi son presenti:
mentre ch' io era a Virgilio congiunto
su per lo monte che l'anime cura
e discendendo nel mondo defunto,
dette mi fuor di mia vita futura
parole gravi, avvegna ch' io mi senta
ben tetragono ai colpi di ventura;
per che la voglia mia saria contenta
d'intender qual fortuna mi s'appressa,
ché saetta previsa vien più lenta."
Così diss' io a quella luce stessa
che pria m'avea parlato, e come volle
Beatrice fu mia voglia confessa.

CANTO 17

Mars, Cacciaguida continued: the prophecies about the pilgrim—his exile foretold—Can Grande—the command to write the vision

As to Clymene, in order to verify what he had
heard against himself, he came who still makes
fathers cautious toward their sons:
such was I, and so was I perceived both by
Beatrice and by the holy lamp that earlier had
changed place because of me.
Therefore my lady: "Send forth the blazing of
your desire," she said, "and let it come forth well
signed with your internal stamp,
not so that our knowledge may grow by your
speech, but that you may become accustomed to
speak your thirst, so that one may pour for you."
"O dear root of me, who enhigh yourself so far
that, as earthly minds see that two obtuse angles
cannot fit in a triangle,
so you see contingent things before they come
to be, gazing at the point to which all times are
present:
while I was together with Virgil, up along the
mountain that restores souls and going down into
the dead world,
heavy words were said to me about my future
life, although I feel solid and foursquare against
the blows of events;
therefore my desire would be contented to
understand what fortune is approaching me: for
an arrow foreseen comes more slowly."
So I said to the same light that had spoken to
me before, and, as Beatrice wished, my desire
was fully spoken.

Né per ambage, in che la gente folle
già s'inviscava pria che fosse anciso
l'Agnel di Dio che le peccata tolle,
ma per chiare parole e con preciso
latin rispuose quello amor paterno,
chiuso e parvente del suo proprio riso:
"La contingenza, che fuor del quaderno
de la vostra matera non si stende,
tutta è dipinta nel cospetto etterno;
necessità però quindi non prende
se non come dal viso in che si specchia
nave che per corrente giù discende.
Da indi, sì come viene ad orecchia
dolce armonia da organo, mi viene
a vista il tempo che ti s'apparecchia.
Qual si partio Ipolito d'Atene
per la spietata e perfida noverca:
tal di Fiorenza partir ti convene.
Questo si vuole e questo già si cerca,
e tosto verrà fatto a chi ciò pensa
là dove Cristo tutto dì si merca.
La colpa seguirà la parte offensa
in grido, come suol, ma la vendetta
fia testimonio al ver che la dispensa.
Tu lascerai ogne cosa diletta
più caramente, e questo è quello strale
che l'arco de lo essilio pria saetta.
Tu proverai sì come sa di sale
lo pane altrui e come è duro calle
lo scendere e 'l salir per l'altrui scale.
E quel che più ti graverà le spalle
sarà la compagnia malvagia e scempia
con la qual tu cadrai in questa valle,
che tutta ingrata, tutta matta ed empia
si farà contr' a te, ma poco appresso
ella, non tu, n'avrà rossa la tempia.
Di sua bestialitate il suo processo
farà la prova, sì ch' a te fia bello
averti fatta parte per te stesso.

Nor with ambiguities, in which the deluded
people used to mire themselves, before the Lamb
of God was killed, who takes away our sins,
but with clear words and precise language did
that paternal love reply, hidden and shining
within its own smile:
"Contingency, which extends no further than
the quaternion of your matter, is all depicted in
the eternal Gaze;
it does not, however, take necessity from there,
any more than from the eye in which it is mirrored
a ship that floats downstream.
Thence, just as to the ear there comes the
sweet harmony of an organ, there comes to my
sight the time that is being prepared for you.
As Hippolytus left Athens because of his
pitiless, treacherous step-mother: so must you
leave Florence.
This is willed, this is already sought, and soon
will be done by him who plans it where Christ is
sold all day long.
The cry of blame will follow the party harmed,
as usual, but the vengeance will testify to the
truth that will dispense it.
You will leave behind everything beloved most
dearly, and this is the arrow that the bow of exile
first lets fly.
You will experience how salty tastes the bread
of another, and what a hard path it is to descend
and mount by another's stairs.
And what will most weigh upon your shoulders
will be the wicked, dimwitted company with whom
you will fall into this valley,
who will become utterly ungrateful, mad, and
cruel against you, but shortly after they, not you,
will blush.
Of their stupidity the outcome will provide the
proof, so that for you it will be well to have
become a party unto yourself.

Lo primo tuo refugio e 'l primo ostello
sarà la cortesia del gran Lombardo
che 'n su la scala porta il santo uccello,
ch' in te avrà sì benigno riguardo
che del fare e del chieder, tra voi due,
fia primo quel che tra li altri è più tardo.
Con lui vedrai colui che 'mpresso fue,
nascendo, sì da questa stella forte
che notabili fier l'opere sue.
Non se ne son le genti ancor accorte
per la novella età, ché pur nove anni
son queste rote intorno di lui torte,
ma pria che 'l Guasco l'alto Arrigo inganni
parran faville de la sua virtute
in non curar d'argento né d'affanni.
Le sue magnificenzie conosciute
saranno ancora, sì che ' suoi nemici
non ne potran tener le lingue mute.
A lui t'aspetta e a' suoi benefici;
per lui fia trasmutata molta gente,
cambiando condizion ricchi e mendici,
e portera'ne scritto ne la mente
di lui, e nol dirai"—e disse cose
incredibili a quei che fier presente.
Poi giunse: "Figlio, queste son le chiose
di quel che ti fu detto: ecco le 'nsidie
che dietro a pochi giri son nascose.
Non vo' però ch' a' tuoi vicini invidie,
poscia che s'infutura la tua vita
via più là che 'l punir di lor perfidie."
Poi che, tacendo, si mostrò spedita
l'anima santa di metter la trama
in quella tela ch' io le porsi ordita,
io cominciai come colui che brama,
dubitando, consiglio da persona
che vede e vuol dirittamente e ama:
"Ben veggio, padre mio, sì come sprona
lo tempo verso me per colpo darmi
tal ch' è più grave a chi più s'abbandona;

Your first refuge and first shelter will be the courtesy of the great Lombard who atop the ladder bears the holy eagle,

who will have such kind regard for you that of doing and asking, between you two, that will be first which among others is later.

With him you will see him who was so strongly stamped at his birth by this star that his works will be worthy of recording.

People have not yet become aware of him, he is so young, for only nine years have these wheels turned about him,

but before the Gascon shall deceive the noble Harry, sparks of his valor will appear, in his indifference to money and to toil.

His great deeds, too, will be known, so that his enemies will be unable to remain silent about them.

Look to him and to his benefactions; many people will be transmuted by him, the rich and beggars exchanging condition,

and you will carry written in your memory about him, and will not say"—and he said things that will be incredible to those who witness them.

Then he added: "Son, these are the glosses on what was said to you: behold the snares that are hidden beyond a few turnings of the heavens.

In spite of them, I would not have you envy your neighbors, since your life enfutures itself far beyond the punishing of their treacheries."

When, falling silent, that holy soul showed it had finished pulling the weft through the warp I had held out to him,

I began, like one who, fearing, desires counsel from a person who sees, and wills, and loves what is just:

"I see clearly, my father, how time is spurring toward me, to give me the kind of blow that falls heaviest on those who are most heedless,

per che di provedenza è buon ch'io m'armi,
sì che, se loco m'è tolto più caro,
io non perdessi li altri per miei carmi.
Giù per lo mondo sanza fine amaro,
e per lo monte del cui bel cacume
li occhi de la mia donna levarmi,
e poscia per lo ciel di lume in lume,
ho io appreso quel che, s'io ridico,
a molti fia sapor di forte agrume;
e s'io al vero son timido amico,
temo di perder viver tra coloro
che questo tempo chiameranno antico."
La luce in che rideva il mio tesoro
ch' io trovai lì si fé prima corusca
quale a raggio di sole specchio d'oro;
indi rispuose: "Coscïenza fusca
o de la propria o de l'altrui vergogna
pur sentirà la tua parola brusca.
Ma nondimen, rimossa ogne menzogna,
tutta tua visïon fa manifesta,
e lascia pur grattar dov' è la rogna.
Ché se la voce tua sarà molesta
nel primo gusto, vital nodrimento
lascerà poi, quando sarà digesta.
Questo tuo grido farà come vento
che le più alte cime più percuote,
e ciò non fa d'onor poco argomento.
Però ti son mostrate in queste rote,
nel monte e ne la valle dolorosa,
pur l'anime che son di fama note,
ché l'animo di quel ch' ode non posa
né ferma fede per essempro ch' aia
la sua radice incognita e ascosa,
né per altro argomento che non paia."

wherefore it is good that I arm myself with foresight, so that, if the dearest place is taken from me, I may not lose the others because of my verses.

Down through the endlessly bitter world, and along the mountain from whose lovely summit the eyes of my lady have raised me,

and afterwards, through the heavens from light to light, I have learned much that, if I relate it, to many will bring a most bitter taste;

and if I am a timid friend to the truth, I fear I will lose life among those who will call this time ancient."

The light wherein my treasure laughed, that I found there, first became bright as a golden mirror in the sun,

then replied: "A conscience dark with its own or another's shame will indeed feel your word to be harsh.

But nonetheless, putting aside every falsehood, make manifest all your vision, and let them still scratch where the itch is.

For if your voice will be painful at the first taste, it will leave vital nourishment later, when it is digested.

This cry of yours will be like a wind that strikes hardest the highest peaks, and this is no small claim to honor.

For this reason have been shown to you in these wheels, on the mountain, and in the sorrowing valley, only the souls who are known to fame,

for the spirit of one who hears does not rest or settle its faith in an example whose root is unknown and hidden,

nor for any other argument that does not appear."

NOTES

1–9. As to Clymene . . . your internal stamp: This solemn beginning prepares for the pilgrim's questions, to which Cacciaguida's answers are the fullest and most explicit statement in the poem that the pilgrim has been divinely chosen for this journey in order to fit him to write his poem and that the duty of writing it is laid upon him by God (it is the ultimate answer to the question he raises in *Inf.* 2.10–36).

1–6. As to Clymene . . . because of me: The reference is to Ovid's telling of the myth of Phaethon (*Met.* 1.750–2.332), an archetypal overreacher: a coequal, hearing the young Phaethon brag of his divine father (Sol, the sun), accuses him of lying and of repeating his mother's lies. Confronting his mother, the boy demands proof and learns the way to the palace of the sun, where his father, unwisely swearing by the river Styx to grant any wish, is forced to allow him to drive the chariot of the sun, with disastrous results, until Jupiter kills the boy with a thunderbolt (hence the caution of fathers, line 3). Both Beatrice and Cacciaguida understand the pilgrim's concern (see the note to 14.97–99). On Dante's frequent (often implicit) references to Phaethon, see Additional Note 7.

7–12. Therefore my lady . . . may pour for you: For anxious curiosity as thirst, cf. *Purg.* 21.1–4, *Par.* 10.88–90, with notes. Dante's *mescere* [to pour drink] implies a somewhat ceremonial occasion.

7–9. Send forth the blazing . . . your internal stamp: The pilgrim's desire to know is fiery, and Beatrice counsels him to express its intensity fully—"signed with your internal stamp" is a coinage metaphor: the mind imprints language with the form of the soul's thought and desire, as the blow of the hammer on the matrix stamps the gold with the legal form of the currency (cf. 24.63–87, with notes, and for this and other coinage images in the *Comedy*, see Durling 1981a).

13–30. O dear root of me . . . was fully spoken: The pilgrim asks Cacciaguida to prepare him for the adverse events that have been obscurely predicted in Hell and Purgatory (*Inf.* 6.64–72, 10.79–81, 15.55–78, 24.139–51; *Purg.* 11.139–41, 24.37–48—the only one with positive content); 32.148–60 is perhaps also referred to, though it is a particularly obscure symbolic event in the Earthly Paradise, after Virgil's departure (the notes to these passages discuss their topical references).

13–18. O dear root of me . . . all times are present: Cacciaguida is lifted so high in Heaven that he can read the future in the mind of God, the "point to which all times are present": God exists in eternity, an absolutely fixed point beyond time, to which all times are present, like the circumference of a circle to its center; this conception has important development in Cantos 28 and 29. That the angles of a triangle may not include two obtuse angles is intuitively grasped by the human mind (they must total 180°; essentially the same question as in 13.101–2, where the matter is less intuitive). The analogy is between geometric intuition (related to the "first knowables," *Purg.*18.55–60; cf. *Par.* 2.40–45, with notes) and Cacciaguida's intuition of the causal chain that will produce future events, contingent on preceding ones (cf. 13.61–66, with notes): all things seen in God are *intuited* (on the model of mathematical intuition).

22–27. heavy words were said . . . comes more slowly: The images of the blows of events in line 24 and the arrow in line 27 introduce the central metaphor of armed combat against Fortune (and her ally, time), to which the image of the tetragon [square] is closely related (see lines 106–11, with notes; Sapegno cites Aquinas's note on Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* 1.10 (1100b): the virtuous man "will bear the chances of life most nobly . . . if he is 'truly good' and 'foursquare beyond reproach'"; cf. *Rhetoric* 3.11 (1411b), on the same quotation from Simonides); Aquinas takes the "square" to refer to a cube.

30. my desire was fully spoken: Lat. *confessus*, from which Dante's word "confesso" is derived, is the past participle of *confiteor*, which originally meant "to tell all" (*con/cum* [entirely, as in *confusio*] + *fateor* [to speak]); "to confess" still means "to hold nothing back."

31–36. Nor with ambiguities . . . its own smile: While the previous prophecies the pilgrim has encountered, though metaphorical, have not been particularly obscure in language, they have been incomplete (see the note to lines 13–30). Cacciaguida gives a full and explicit prediction.

31–33. Nor with ambiguities . . . takes away our sins: Dante's "ambagi" is from Lat. *ambages* (a roundabout or labyrinthine path or an evasive expression; from *ambi* [around] + *ago* [to drive]), frequent in Roman writers for the language of oracles. Among other examples (cf. *Met.* 7.761), Dante has in mind *Aen.* 6.98–100:

> Talibus ex adyto dictis Cumaea Sibylla
> horrendas canit ambages antroque remugit,

obscuris vera involvens
[With such words the Cumaean Sibyl from her sanctuary
sang horrible ambiguities and bellowed through the cave,
wrapping true things in obscure ones]

Augustine has much to say about the "deceiving oracles" of the pagan gods (really devils, according to widespread Jewish and Christian belief): see *De civ. Dei* 18.12–24, 19.23–25. *Inviscarsi* means properly "to be caught in birdlime." At the death (or in some texts, the birth) of Christ, the demons were forced to abandon their temples and oracles.

37–99. Contingency, which extends . . . of their treacheries: After nine lines on the modality of his knowledge of the future (lines 37–45), Cacciaguida foretells the pilgrim's exile: its cause (lines 46–51), the pilgrim's eventual vindication (lines 52–54), its inherent painfulness and poverty (lines 55–60), the unworthy sharers in exile he will encounter (lines 61–69), and the help he will receive from the Scaligeri of Verona, especially Can Grande (lines 70–93). Nine lines of conclusion (lines 94–103) foretell the closeness of the disaster and urge the pilgrim not to feel negatively toward his treacherous fellow Florentines.

37–45. Contingency, which extends . . . prepared for you: Cacciaguida sees future events on earth as they are held in the mind of God, the "eternal Gaze," whose serenity is not affected by them. A quaternion (or quire) is the folded gathering of pages that is sewn with others to form a book or codex. Only what is below the moon is subject to contingency, and the universe consists of many more such gatherings (the book metaphor recurs in lines 94–96, see note there; and cf. the grandiose, climactic instance in 33.85–93).

40–42. it does not . . . floats downstream: Contingent events do not become necessary (i.e., predetermined) from God's foreknowledge, any more than a ship floating downstream is affected by the eye of an observer. The analogy of the ship appears to be Dante's, but that God's existence in eternity makes the entire "moving image of eternity" (*Tim.* 28) simultaneously knowable without determining it, is Boethius' solution (*Consol.* 5.5) to the puzzle of foreknowledge and predetermination, frequently adopted by the Scholastics (e.g., in *ST* 1a q. 14 a. 13).

43–45. Thence, just as . . . prepared for you: The rhetorical limitation (lines 37–42) and disarming of the future events continues in the comparison of their knowledge with sweet organ music (note the parallel with *Purg.* 9.133–45:

another opening of a door). The previous reference to the sublunar contributes an implication of distance also.

46–51. As Hippolytus left . . . sold all day long: Treachery and machinations in Florence and in Rome (obviously in the papal curia) are already setting in motion the events that will lead to the pilgrim's exile.

46–48. As Hippolytus left . . . you leave Florence: Dante knew the story of Hippolytus, the son of Theseus, from Ovid (*Met.* 15.492–546): Phaedra, the younger sister of Ariadne, married to Theseus after he abandoned her sister, fell in love with Hippolytus (the son of Theseus's first wife), who refused her advances; she then accused him of attempted rape before his father, who cursed him, causing his death by a sea monster while fleeing Athens (Ovid's version has him miraculously restored to life as a minor deity and dwelling near Rome).

49–51. This is willed . . . all day long: Cf. *Inf.* 6.64–76, Ciacco's prophecy of the internal strife in Florence, fostered by "one who now hugs the shore" (line 69), a clear reference to Boniface VIII, notoriously corrupt; "selling Christ," which refers to Judas's crime (Luke 22.1–6), stands for all forms of simony (cf. *Inf.* 19.52–56, with notes, *Inferno* Additional Note 7, and *Par.* 27.19–66).

52–54. The cry of blame. . . . will dispense it: At first people will suppose, as always happens, that the victim of the injustice is exiled for some crime, but the ultimate punishment of the guilty will vindicate him (on the Florentine principally responsible, Corso Donati, see *Purg.* 24.82–90).

55–60. You will leave . . . by another's stairs: The inherent bitterness of exile: the loss of home (for Dante's many expressions of love for Florence, see 25.1–12, with notes) and family, and reduction to poverty and dependency on others for food and lodging. "The bread of another" tastes of salt because it is eaten with tears of homesickness and humiliation at being forced to beg. Note the force of the order of "descend and mount": the first ascent of another's stairs might be optimistic, but the first descent, like the others, will be bitter because of humiliation and probably disappointment. Famous, terse lines.

61–69. And what will most . . . a party unto yourself: The most burdensome (and potentially dangerous) aspect of sharing exile ("this valley") with the other members of the White Guelph party driven into exile in eastern Tuscany by the coup d'état of November 1301 (see our introduction to *Inferno*) will be their wickedness and stupidity, expressed in futile attempts to overcome the

Blacks by force of arms. Presumably Dante earned their hatred by strongly opposing their unrealistic military hopes. The definitive defeat ("the outcome") took place on 20 July 1304 (the birthday of the poet Petrarch, whose father fought in the battle), by which time Dante had (sometime after April 1304) dissociated himself from the White party, forming, as he says, a political party unto himself (one of some importance: he was conspicuous as a pamphleteer until the death of the emperor Henry VII in 1313).

70–96. Your first refuge . . . who witness them: Cacciaguida foretells Dante's special debt of gratitude to the rulers of Verona.

70–75. Your first refuge . . . among others is later: Dante seems to have been in Rome, or on his way from there back to Florence, when he learned of the Black coup (see *Inferno* Additional Note 9); his first refuge, according to this passage, was Verona, which Dante reckoned part of Lombardy.

The identity of the "great Lombard" (line 71) and the dates of Dante's stay(s) in Verona have been much debated. Alberto della Scala, who ruled from 1271 to 1301, was harshly criticized in *Purg.* 18.121–26; of his three sons, the second, Alboino (ruled, in association with Cangrande, 1304–11), was very slightingly mentioned in *Conv.* 4.16. 6; it is unlikely that the term "great" refers to either. Bartolomeo, the oldest son, who ruled from 1301 to 1304, married a great-granddaughter of the emperor Frederick II in 1302 and (until Alboino and Cangrande were named imperial vicars by Henry VII) was the only member of the family who had borne the imperial eagle above the ladder [*scala*] in his coat of arms. The conclusions of Petrocchi 1966 and 1984 have been widely adopted (see also Arnaldi 1966, Arnaldi 1970a, and Arnaldi 1970b): Dante probably stayed in Verona twice (1301–04 and ca. 1311–ca. 1319, thus avoiding the period of Alboino's primacy); the "great Lombard" whose generosity and courtesy are praised, then, is probably Bartolomeo.

76–93. With him you will see . . . who witness them: Cangrande, Alberto della Scala's youngest son, was born 9 March 1291, thus under Aries and Mars (see lines 76–78). He became the chief leader of the Italian Ghibellines early on, gaining notable victories in favor of Henry VII over Vicenza (1311–12) and later over Padova (1314). After the death of Henry VII in 1313, Cangrande continued, with moderate success, in his endeavor to establish Veronese hegemony in northeastern Italy, but nothing came of his efforts that remotely resembled what Dante clearly expected he would achieve. When Dante died, Cangrande was a very promising thirty-year-old; Dante was not to foresee that he would die in 1329, not yet in his fortieth year.

82–84. but before the Gascon . . . to money and to toil: The "Gascon" is Pope Clement V (see *Inf.* 19.82–87, with notes), who seemed at first to favor Henry VII's effort to establish imperial authority in Italy, but even before Henry's coronation in Rome (June 1312) he began more and more openly to oppose him. Cangrande's early military successes took place in this period.

88. Look to him and to his benefactions: Cangrande seems to have supported Dante handsomely in Verona during his second stay there, to the extent that (taking Epistle 13, to Cangrande, as genuine, which seems most likely) he formally dedicated the *Paradiso* to him (Petrocchi suggests that *Paradiso* 17 was written as an expression of gratitude on the occasion of Dante's leaving Verona for Ravenna in 1316 or 1317; in any case relations with Cangrande remained cordial, and Dante returned to Verona briefly in January 1320 to lecture on the *Quaestio de acqua et terra*).

89–93. many people will be . . . who witness them: Modern scholars have been particularly puzzled by these lines, for Cangrande did not achieve the degree of power and influence they imply. It has been suggested that Cangrande is the "greyhound" [*veltro*] foretold in *Inf.* 1.91–111 as the future victor over the she-wolf of avarice (the identification is based partly on the fact that the name, derived from the Mongol title *khan* [prince], means "dog" in Italian).

91–92. you will carry written . . . and will not say: Cacciaguida prophesies events that the poet is not to mention. Note the explicit book metaphor for memory.

94–99. Then he added . . . of their treacheries: Cacciaguida adds a summarizing conclusion and the advice not to envy (or not to harbor hatred against) his fellow Florentines, in spite of their treachery, since he will be remembered when their very punishment will be forgotten (cf. *Purg.* 11.140–41, on Dante's "vicini" [neighbors]).

94–96. Son, these are the glosses . . . turnings of the heavens: Glosses are short explanations added (often interlinearly) to a text; the metaphor of the "book of memory" is implicit here, and the "turnings" of the heavens that hide the future are like those of the pages of a codex or a scroll.

98–99. your life enfutures . . . of their treacheries: Clearly a prediction of the lasting fame Dante will gain through the *Comedy*, which becomes the next subject.

100–142. When, falling silent . . . that does not appear: The rest of the canto is devoted to the pilgrim's second question: how should he deal with the danger of offending the powerful by speaking openly about what he has learned on his journey?

100–102. had finished pulling . . . held out to him: Cacciaguida has completed his answer to the pilgrim's question; the metaphor is that of a strung loom, with the warp (the fixed threads) in place, through which the weaver has drawn the shuttle, depositing the weft: the cloth has been woven.

104. who sees . . . loves what is just: The adverb "dirittamente" [justly] modifies all three verbs; thus in the translation "what is just" is the direct object of all three verbs; in other words, Cacciaguida sees what is just, desires it, and loves it.

106–20. I see clearly . . . this time ancient: Cacciaguida has told the pilgrim what the disastrous future will bring; now the pilgrim asks for counsel about how to use the dangerous knowledge he has gained on his journey: he will have the difficult choice between offending the powerful or "losing life" among future generations, in other words, losing the glory or immortality of a great poet.

106–8. how time is spurring . . . most heedless: In his first question, the pilgrim had referred to his future with the metaphor of an arrow (lines 26–27), a weapon used from a distance. Now his adversary (time) is spoken of as a warrior mounted on a horse and spurring toward him in order to deliver his blow (this new context requires the blow to be that of a lance or a sword). The language is that of knightly combat; see the next note.

109–11. it is good that I arm . . . because of my verses: Foresight is thought of here as defensive armor ("to arm oneself" meant to don armor, not to take up a weapon). Cacciaguida's role includes providing (metaphorical) armor, as the sponsor of a new knight often did (for the sword, see the note to lines 124–42).

110–11. if the dearest place . . . because of my verses: The "dearest place" is Florence and home; "the others" refers to the possibility of being a guest of the powerful; the next three terzinas will explain the pilgrim's anxiety. The Italian *carmi* is a Latinism; Lat. *carmina* for "verses" is used by Dante in his poetic correspondence with Giovanni del Virgilio; the reference is of course to the *Comedy*.

112–20. Down through the endlessly . . . this time ancient: Like lines 19–21, a recapitulation of the poem, this time including the *Paradiso*. In the course of his journey, the pilgrim has learned much that is to the discredit of many

powerful individuals; if he relates it, it will taste bitter to them and those close to them, and if he does not, he will lose credit with posterity.

118–20. if I am a timid . . . call this time ancient: Only uncompromising devotion to the truth will keep his name alive among distant posterity. Dante did not harbor small aspirations, as these justly famous verses show.

121–42. The light wherein . . . does not appear: Cacciaguida rejoices to counsel the pilgrim to serve the truth without compromise. The image of the golden mirror in the sunlight serves, among other things, to remind us that all the planets receive their light from the sun.

124–42. A conscience dark . . . does not appear: After acknowledging that the poet's identification of crimes and abuses will be painful to the guilty, Cacciaguida urges him to express his vision (i.e., write his poem) fully without regard for the consequences (lines 124–29), for, if painful at first his verses will leave vital nourishment when digested—the implication is that they may be beneficial also to the guilty (lines 130–32). His criticism will strike the most conspicuous examples (and his courage will be a chief claim to honor), and that is why during his journey only the most famous souls have been shown to him, so that his reader will the more readily believe him (lines 136–42).

Other instances of the command that he write are shorter and subordinated to this one: see *Purg.* 32.100–105 and 33.52–57, and *Par.* 27.64–66. This passage also represents the chief function of the parallels with Aeneas's encounter with his father, Anchises, in *Aen.* 6.703–892 (see 15.25–27, with note). Although the parallels with the ceremonies of being knighted and of assuming the cross as a Crusader are kept largely implicit, they are unmistakable: as to the knighting, we have the following parallels: Cacciaguida as sponsor and instructor of the new knight in his duties, furnishing him with his sword (the pen) and his defensive armor (foresight), and doing so on the eve of his great battle (as was the custom), indicating the adversaries of the right, and delivering the blow upon the neck or shoulder (parallel to the bishop's slap on the cheek in the sacrament of confirmation) that symbolizes the new knight's humble acceptance of possible suffering and death in the service of the right (in the pilgrim's case the blow is represented by the prediction of his exile). The taking on of the Cross as a Crusader has been conspicuously alluded to: implicitly in that the denizens of Mars are the fighters for the faith (some are enumerated in 18.28–51), explicitly in 14.96 and 15.100–108 (for further discussion, including the parallels with Dante's references in earlier works to the parallel between poets and knights and the ceremony of knighting, see Durling/Martinez 1990, Appendix 1).

124–26. A conscience dark . . . word to be harsh: For the ideal state of the mind (conscience includes all levels of awareness, not only "conscience," but including it) as a crystalline clarity, see *Purg.* 13.85–90.

127–29. But nonetheless, putting . . . where the itch is: Note that the Italian avoids specifying who is doing the scratching: "Let there be scratching where the itch is": the poet need not be concerned, the guilty will know themselves, the bestiality of shame has its own automatic mechanisms. Famous lines, tartly scornful.

130–32. For if your voice . . . when it is digested: That truth is the food of the soul, falsehood a poison for it, is a strain of traditional imagery that pervades the *Comedy*; for it and for the idea of reading as parallel to ingestion and meditation to digestion, see Durling 1981a. Note the identification of the poet's text with his *voice* (cf. *Inf.* 1.62–63, with note; *Par.* 4.49–60, with notes).

133–42. This cry of yours . . . that does not appear: In the traditional topos, high places (whether physical or social) are more exposed to the wind of misfortune than lower ones. A typical counsel of moderation is Horace, *Odes* 2.10.1–12:

> Rectius vives, Licini, neque altum
> semper urgendo neque, dum procellas
> cautus horrescis, nimium premendo
> litus iniquum.
> auream quisquis mediocritatem
> diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
> sordibus tecti, caret invidenda
> sobrius aula.
> saepius ventis agitatur ingens
> pinus et celsae graviore casu
> decidunt turres feruntque summos
> fulgura montis.
> [You will live more justly, Licinius, neither daring
> always the deep, nor, during the storms
> your caution fears, too closely hugging
> the rocky shore.
> Whoever loves the golden
> middle state, he will avoid the squalor
> of a neglected roof, will soberly avoid
> the envy drawn by a sumptuous hall.

More often do the winds agitate the giant
pine, and high towers fall
more heavily, and the mountain tops
are struck by lightning.]

Dante is turning the topos upside down in his lines: he (or his voice) is imagined as the wind of change, attacking the wickedness prevalent in high places.

135. this is no small claim to honor: Part of the poet's claim to honor is that he does not hesitate to attack the powerful if they deserve it.

136–42. For this reason . . . that does not appear: The entire journey, then, has been governed by a providential plan to put the pilgrim in contact with important examples ("known to fame") of good or evil conduct in each of the three realms ("in these wheels [Heaven], on the mountain [of Purgatory], and in the sorrowing valley [Hell]").

139–42. for the spirit of one . . . does not appear: The providential plan has been based on a rhetorical principle, then: the spirit of the hearer (reader) is moved only by examples whose validity is known to him or her or by other open and clear arguments.

CANTO 18

Già si godeva solo del suo verbo
quello specchio beato, e io gustava
lo mio, temprando col dolce l'acerbo,
e quella donna ch' a Dio mi menava
disse: "Muta pensier; pensa ch' i' sono
presso a colui ch' ogne torto disgrava."
Io mi rivolsi a l'amoroso suono
del mio conforto, e qual io allor vidi
ne li occhi santi amor, qui l'abbandono,
non perch' io del mio parlar diffidi,
ma per la mente, che non può redire
sovra sé tanto, s' altri non la guidi.
Tanto poss' io di quel punto ridire:
che rimirando lei lo mio affetto
libero fu da ogne altro disire,
fin che 'l Piacere etterno, che diretto
raggiava in Bëatrice, dal bel viso
mi contentava col secondo aspetto.
Vincendo me col lume d'un sorriso,
ella mi disse: "Volgiti e ascolta,
ché non pur ne' miei occhi è Paradiso."
Come si vede qui alcuna volta
l'affetto ne la vista, s' elli è tanto
che da lui sia tutta l'anima tolta:
così nel fiammeggiar del folgór santo
a ch' io mi volsi, conobbi la voglia
in lui di ragionarmi ancora alquanto.
El cominciò: "In questa quinta soglia
de l'albero che vive de la cima
e frutta sempre e mai non perde foglia,

CANTO 18

Mars, Cacciaguida, continued: the warriors named—Jupiter: just rulers —the Eagle

Already that blessed mirror was rejoicing only
in its thought, and I was tasting mine, tempering
the bitter with the sweet,
and the lady who was leading me to God said:
"Change your thought; think that I am close to the
One who lightens every injury."
I turned to the loving sound of my comfort, and
what love I saw then in her holy eyes, I here
abandon it,
not because I lack confidence in my speech,
but because my memory cannot return so far
above itself, if not guided by another.
This much I can relate of that point: gazing on
her, my affect was free of any other
desire
while the eternal Pleasure, shining directly on
Beatrice, contented me with its reflection in her
lovely face.
Vanquishing me with the light of a smile, she
said: "Turn and listen, for not only in my eyes is
Paradise."
As down here we sometimes see the affect in
someone's eyes, if it is so great that the whole
soul is seized by it:
so in the blazing of the holy fire to which I
turned I recognized its desire to speak somewhat
further with me.
It began: "In this fifth threshold of the tree that
draws life from its summit and bears fruit perpetually,
without shedding a leaf,

spiriti son beati che giù, prima
che venissero al Ciel, fuor di gran voce,
sì ch' ogne musa ne sarebbe opima.
Però mira ne' corni de la croce:
quello ch' io nomerò, lì farà l'atto
che fa in nube il suo foco veloce."
Io vidi per la croce un lume tratto
dal nomar Iosuè, com' el si feo,
né mi fu noto il dir prima che 'l fatto.
E al nome de l'alto Macabeo
vidi moversi un altro roteando,
e letizia era ferza del paleo.
Così per Carlo Magno e per Orlando
due ne seguì lo mio attento sguardo,
com' occhio segue suo falcon volando.
Poscia trasse Guiglielmo e Rinoardo
e 'l duca Gottifredi la mia vista
per quella croce, e Ruberto Guiscardo.
Indi, tra l'altre luci mota e mista,
mostrommi l'alma che m'avea parlato
qual era tra i cantor del Cielo artista.
Io mi rivolsi dal mio destro lato
per vedere in Beatrice il mio dovere
o per parlare o per atto segnato,
e vidi le sue luci tanto mere,
tanto gioconde, che la sua sembianza
vinceva li altri e l'ultimo solere.
E come per sentire più dilettanza
bene operando l'uomo di giorno in giorno
s'accorge che sua virtute avanza:
sì m'accors' io che 'l mio girare intorno
col cielo insieme avea cresciuto l'arco,
veggendo quel miracol più addorno.
E qual è 'l trasmutare in picciol varco
di tempo in bianca donna, quando 'l volto
suo si discarchi di vergogna il carco:
tal fu ne li occhi miei, quando fui vòlto,
per lo candor de la temprata stella
sesta, che dentro a sé m'avea ricolto.

there are blessed spirits who, below, before they came to Heaven, had great fame, so that every muse would be richly furnished by them.

Therefore gaze at the horns of the Cross: the one I name will move there like swift fire within its cloud."

I saw a light drawn along the Cross, simultaneous with the naming of Joshua, nor did I perceive the speech before the event.

And at the name of the great Maccabee I saw another move spinning, and joy was the whip for the top.

Thus for Charlemagne and Roland my attentive gaze followed two of them, as one's eye follows its falcon in its flight.

Then William and Renoart and duke Godfrey drew my sight along that Cross, and Robert Guiscard.

Then, moving and mingling with the other lights, the soul that had spoken with me showed what an artist he was among the singers of Heaven.

I turned to my right side to see what I should do, shown in Beatrice by a word or gesture,

and I saw her eyes to be so bright, so joyous, that her expression surpassed her former and her latest custom.

And, as a man day by day perceives, from feeling greater delight in acting well, that his virtue is increasing:

so I perceived that my turning about with the heavens had increased its arc, seeing that miracle grow lovelier.

And like the changing in a short interval of time of a lady's white face, when it unburdens itself of the burden of shame:

such was what I saw, when I turned about, in the whiteness of the temperate sixth star, which had received me within itself.

Io vidi in quella giovïal facella
lo sfavillar de l'amor che lì era
segnare a li occhi miei nostra favella.
E come augelli surti di rivera,
quasi congratulando a lor pastura,
fanno di sé or tonda or altra schiera:
sì dentro ai lumi sante creature
volitando cantavano e faciensi
or *D*, or *I*, or *L* in sue figure.
Prima cantando a sua nota moviensi;
poi, diventando l'un di questi segni,
un poco s'arrestavano e taciensi.
O diva Pegasëa, che li 'ngegni
fai gloriosi e rendeli longevi,
ed essi teco le cittadi e ' regni,
illustrami di te sì ch' io rilevi
le lor figure com' io l'ho concette:
paia tua possa in questi versi brevi!
Mostrarsi dunque in cinque volte sette
vocali e consonanti, e io notai
le parti sì come mi parver dette.
"*DILIGITE IUSTITIAM*" primai
fur verbo e nome di tutto 'l dipinto,
"*QUI IUDICATIS TERRAM*" fur sezzai.
Poscia ne l'emme del vocabol quinto
rimaser ordinate, sì che Giove
pareva argento lì d'oro distinto.
E vidi scender altre luci dove
era il colmo de l'emme e lì quetarsi,
cantando, credo, il ben ch' a sé li move.
Poi, come nel percuoter d'i ciocchi arsi
surgono innumerabili faville,
onde li stolti sogliono agurarsi:
resurger parver quindi più di mille
luci e salir, qual assai e qual poco,
sì come 'l sol che l'accende sortille,
e, quïetata ciascuna in suo loco,
la testa e 'l collo d'un'aguglia vidi
rappresentare a quel distinto foco.

I saw in that Jovial torch that the flashing of the love there made sign to my eyes of our speech.

As birds, rising from a river, seeming to rejoice together at their feeding, make of themselves now a round, now some other outline:

so within their lights holy creatures flew back and forth singing, and in their figures they became now *D*, now *I*, now *L*.

First, singing, they would move to their notes, then, becoming one of these signs, they would rest a little and be silent.

O Pegasean goddess who make our poets glorious and give them longevity, as they, with you, do to cities and kingdoms,

illumine me with your light, so that I may set forth their figures as I have conceived them: let your power appear in these brief verses!

They showed themselves, then, in five times seven vowels and consonants, and I noted the parts as they were dictated to me.

"*DILIGITE IUSTITIAM*" were the first verb and noun of the whole depiction,
"*QUI IUDICATIS TERRAM*" were the last.

Then they remained arranged in the *M* of the fifth word, so that Jove appeared there silver adorned with gold.

And I saw other lights descend to the summit of the *M* and grow quiet there, singing, I believe, the Good that moves them to itself.

Then, as at the striking of smoldering logs innumerable sparks fly up, from which fools often take auguries:

I seemed to see more than a thousand lights fly up, some far, some but a little, as the Sun that kindles them allotted,

and, each coming to rest in its place, I saw the head and neck of an eagle represented by that articulated fire.

Quei che dipinge lì non ha chi 'l guidi,
ma esso guida, e da lui si rammenta
quella virtù ch' è forma per li nidi.
L'altra bëatitudo, che contenta
pareva prima d'ingigliarsi a l'emme,
con poco moto seguitò la 'mprenta.
O dolce stella, quali e quante gemme
mi dimostraro che nostra giustizia
effetto sia del ciel che tu ingemme!
Per ch'io prego la mente in che s'inizia
tuo moto e tua virtute che rimiri
ond' esce il fummo che 'l tuo raggio vizia,
sì ch' un'altra fiata omai s'adiri
del comperare e vender dentro al Templo
che si murò di segni e di martiri.
O milizia del Ciel cu' io contemplo,
adora per color che sono in terra,
tutti svïati dietro al malo essemplo!
Già si solea con le spade far guerra,
ma or si fa togliendo or qui or quivi
lo pan che 'l pïo Padre a nessun serra.
Ma tu che sol per cancellare scrivi,
pensa che Pietro e Paulo, che moriro
per la vigna che guasti, ancor son vivi.
Ben puoi tu dire: "I' ho fermo 'l disiro
sì a colui che volle viver solo
e che per salti fu tratto al martiro,
ch' io non conosco il pescator né Polo."

He who portrays there has no one to guide
him, but he guides, and from him is remembered
the power that is the form for nests.
The other beatitudes, that earlier had appeared
contented to enlily themselves in the *M*, adjusted
to the new imprint with small motions.
O sweet star, what and how many gems
showed me that our justice is the effect of the
heaven that you begem!
Therefore I beg the Mind that initiates your
motion and your power, that it look whence
comes the smoke that vitiates your shining,
so that yet again it may be angered by the
buying and selling within the Temple whose
walls were built with miracles and martyrdoms.
O army of Heaven that I contemplate, pray for
those who are on earth, all astray behind the evil
example!
In the past they made war with swords, but
now they do it by withholding, now here, now
there, the bread the merciful Father locks away from no one.
But you who write only to strike out, remember
that Peter and Paul, who died for the vine you are
laying waste, are still alive.
You can well say: "My desire is so fixed on him
who wished to live alone, whom dancing led to
martyrdom,
that I know not the fisherman nor Pol."

NOTES

1–18. Already that blessed . . . her lovely face: Cacciaguida has fallen silent (he is referred to as a mirror because he sees the future in God and reflects it to the pilgrim: cf. 17.39; cf. 17.123); the pilgrim is considering his prophecy and advice; Beatrice recalls him to the eternal happiness that will eventually efface all memory of suffering.

1–3. Already that blessed . . . the bitter with the sweet: Cacciaguida's replies have foretold both earthly suffering (exile and blame, possiby danger) and earthly rewards (the satisfaction of loyalty to truth, and fame and glory) which temper (lessen, moderate) the painful thoughts. Note the food metaphors ("tasting," "bitter," "sweet"; cf. 17.55–60, 130–32).

1, 3. rejoicing only in its thought . . . tasting mine: Dante's term translated here as "thought" is *verbo*, rich in connotations: from a spoken word (especially one that has causal effect, as a decree) to the Logos itself. What Cacciaguida has spoken is what God has decreed, and the pilgrim is "tasting" its implications: it is "his" *verbo* in so far as it foretells his future.

4–18. and the lady . . . her lovely face: Beatrice understands that the pilgrim is still troubled and reminds him of the eternal love and joy that await him.

5–6. think that I am . . . lightens every injury: Beatrice is close to Christ: the reference is ultimately to Christ's words in Matt. 11.28–30: "Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you . . . For my yoke is sweet and my burden light" (cf. 14.100–108, with notes).

7–18. I turned . . . her lovely face: Another elaborate version of the inexpressibility topos (Dante's use of it is carefully gradated): as the pilgrim rises higher in the heavens, he is approaching both the end (his personal suffering and death, but also the goal of all his desires) and the beginning (both are "the point to which all times are present"); confrontation with future suffering brings the intensification of the sense of compensatory reward.

13–18. Thus much I can . . . her lovely face: This passage should be compared with 10.55–63, another passage depending on the distinction between mediated and unmediated relation to God. Beatrice always represents some form

of mediation of grace or illumination, and the emphasis on the reflection in Beatrice of God as "eternal Pleasure" (shining "directly" on her) is higher than previously, high enough to engross his affect.

22–51. As down here . . . the singers of Heaven: A kind of coda to the cantos of Mars is furnished by Cacciaguida's identification of seven warriors for the faith, and he himself then joins their dance and singing.

22–27. As down here . . . somewhat further with me: We know from 5.124–26 that the brightness that veils the blessed issues from their eyes; here Cacciaguida's desire to speak further is specifically discernible in his brightness.

28–33. In this fifth . . . furnished by them: Cacciaguida announces that he will identify some of the famous souls, who would furnish ample material for poetry (the term *muse* here is equivalent to individual poets' inspirations). In *DVE* 2.6–8, Dante identifies three worthy subjects of poetry: arms, love, and righteousness (he does not distinguish between secular and religious warfare there). He clearly has epic poetry in mind here, and all but one of the Christian heroes mentioned became the subject of legend in the vernacular *chansons de geste*, the other in a poem in Latin.

28–30. In this fifth . . . shedding a leaf: Mars is the fifth planet ascending (as Venus is fifth descending, beginning with Saturn), and the planets are thresholds the pilgrim crosses in his ascent, gaining each time more light and love. The "tree" that "draws life from its summit," produces fruit (sublunar things), and never loses its leaves is the cosmos of celestial spheres, perfect and unalterable, fed by God's creative power from above. The image is more fully and strikingly developed in 27.106–20; see note there.

34–36. Therefore gaze . . . fire within its cloud: As Thomas guides the pilgrim's eye sequentially around his circle (10.97–102; cf. 12.127–41, 20.31–72), Cacciaguida instructs him where to look and how to interpret what he sees: the pilgrim is to gaze at the ends of the arms of the Cross (its "horns"), Cacciaguida will name a soul, and the soul will express its joy by seeming like lightning. Focus on the arms of the Cross emphasizes the military prowess of those identified, since arms and hands use the sword to fight.

35–36. will move there . . . fire within its cloud: The image is one of the swiftness and brilliance of lightning, thought to be caused by clouds containing fire.

37–48. I saw a light . . . and Robert Guiscard: Seven heroes, two of them from Old Testament times, five of them heroes in wars against the Muslims (the count of five invokes the number of Mars—called to our attention by line 28—and probably signifies that as defenders of Christendom they are more ideal instances of the planet's influence).

37–39. I saw a light . . . before the event: The leader of the Israelites in the conquest of Canaan, related in the book of Joshua. The emphasis is on speed.

40–42. And at the name . . . whip for the top: Judas Maccabaeus, with his brothers, led the Jews in their successful revolt against Antiochus IV (died 160 BCE), the Hellenizing Seleucid emperor (Judea was part of the Seleucid Empire at the time) who sought to suppress Judaism. Four books of the Maccabees survive in the Septuagint; two of them were accepted as canonical by the early and medieval Church.

42. joy was the whip for the top: The speed of the soul's spinning expresses his rejoicing. Children used small whips to maintain the speed of spinning tops.

43–45. Thus for Charlemagne . . . falcon in its flight: Charlemagne and Roland, his nephew (who seems to have been a historical person), figured in a whole cycle of *chansons de geste*, many of which concerned the wars against the Muslims in Spain; the most famous of them is the *Song of Roland* (ca. 1100).

45. as one's eye follows . . . in its flight: Falcons are extremely swift flyers and typically fly very high, diving on their prey. The impression of tremendous height relative to the observer seems to be the principal effect aimed at here.

46–48. Then William . . . and Robert Guiscard: William, count of Orange, was a contemporary of Charlemagne who figured in the wars against the Saracens in southern France; his cycle of *chansons de geste* is also filled with pious legends, among others that of the giant Rainouart in *Aliscans* (see Ferrante 1974), whom William supposedly converted to Christianity (Dante clearly supposed Rainouart to be a historical figure). Duke Godfrey is Godfrey of Boulogne, leader of the first Crusade, who died in 1100 as king of Jerusalem; a number of *chansons de geste* concerned episodes of the crusade. Robert Guiscard (1015–85) was the leader of the Norman intervention against the Muslims in southern Italy and Sicily that established the Norman kingdom of Sicily; he was the subject of a poem in Latin hexameters by William of Puglia.

49–51. Then, moving and mingling . . . the singers of Heaven: Cacciaguida joins the others in their singing and dancing.

51. showed what an artist . . . the singers of Heaven: The implication is, of course, that he was a particularly fine artist. The end of the pilgrim's stay in Mars, which has occupied exactly three-eighths of Canto 18. Dante seems to be the first medieval writer to use the term *artista* [artist] in a generalized sense, as here.

52–136. I turned to my right . . . fisherman nor Pol: We now reach the planet Jupiter, from whose influence, the poet says (lines 115–17), comes everything we know on earth of justice, and where we encounter one of Dante's most impressive symbols, the gigantic eagle formed by myriad souls ("more than a thousand" in the head and neck alone) all acting and speaking as one, the personification both of the principle of justice and the figure of an ideal polity. It has not escaped the commentators that 18 = 6 + 6 + 6 (or 3 x 6—the Trinity's influence—product—on earthly existence?). (For the sixth cantos of each cantica, see the note to 6.1–142.) Now we are to confront God's Justice itself, as far as the human mind can grasp it.

52–63. I turned to my right . . . miracle grow lovelier: The turning to Beatrice for instructions repeats the gesture of lines 7–8, where the theme of the increase in Beatrice's beauty is more fully developed ("her latest custom" refers to lines 8–21). The difference in the two passages lies in the first being a marker of the completion of a stage, the second the transition to a new one: the emphasis is not so much on the pilgrim's delighting in her beauty as a reflection of God, as on his awareness of the change in his location. From this further increase in Beatrice's beauty, the pilgrim infers that the arc of his revolution with the celestial spheres has increased; that is, that he has risen to a sphere of larger dimensions and thus to the next planet (notice the relevance of the last note).

58–63. And, as a man . . . miracle grow lovelier: The change in Beatrice, by which the pilgrim infers his ascent into Jupiter, is compared to the delight connected with increasing virtue, a repeated experience in Purgatory (cf. *Purg.* 12.118–27, 27.15–23). The implication of these lines for the nature of the ascent is noteworthy, for the happiness of growth in virtue derives directly from the growth in intellectual self-possession (see 14.37–60, with notes), another instance of the primacy of intellect.

64–69. And like the changing . . . me within itself: When the pilgrim turns to look at the new planet, he sees that the red color of Mars has been changed

to the white of Jupiter. The "burden of shame" is the lady's blush, which drains from her face as it returns almost instantaneously to its normal whiteness. For the temperance connected with Jupiter, see 22.144–47, with notes, and Additional Note 12. Until this point, the transition from Mars has taken place in terms of analogies with earthly events of a certain intimacy: the gazing into a lady's eyes; the observation, in a small social group, of a lady's passing blush. Now things change dramatically.

70–96. I saw in that Jovial . . . adorned with gold: The first phase of the spectacular light-show, as one may indeed call this extraordinary display of Dante's imaginative power, carefully prepared by and gradated with the collective spectacles provided by the souls in the sun and Mars: the spelling out by the myriad souls of a sequence of letters—they are to be imagined in the form of fourteenth-century Gothic display capitals (see figure 12, 13)—thoses of a famous biblical phrase admonishing rulers, to be followed by even more spectacular effects.

70–81. I saw in that Jovial . . . and be silent: Dante's awareness of the unprecedented nature of his imagining is perceptible in the great care he takes to explain it. First a general statement (lines 70–72), then the vivid simile of the birds (lines 73–76), followed by the full description of the procedure (lines 77–81).

70–72. I saw in that Jovial . . . of our speech: The term *segnare* [to sign, to make sign, to make a sign] suspends the specification that the signs in question are *letters* until line 78. Dante avoids the term *scrivere* [to write], which implies *tracing* (leaving behind a trace); even in modern Italian there is no term exactly corresponding to our verb *to spell*.

70. Jovial torch: The modern usage of *jovial* as meaning good-humored or cheerful is a survival in the popular tradition of the astrological conception of personality types as the "children of the planets." Dante's insistence on the planet Jupiter as representing the exalted principle of God's justice is of course much more ambitious than the popular conceptions.

73–81. As birds, rising . . . and be silent: The birds in the simile are as if seen from a considerable distance, an effect greatly helped by the mention of the river, which also, along with the reference to their feeding, suggests a morning scene. Note the parallel with *Inf.* 5.40–42, where the point is the disorder and randomness of the flight of starlings. (The term *schiera* is rich in suggestion; both in *Inferno* 5 and here it is used to suggest a multitude; here it is translated

Figure 12. "DILIGITE IUSTITIAM"

"outline" in order to preserve some of its original strong connotation of "battle line": cf. the notes to *Inf.* 5.40–46).

76–81. so within their lights . . . and be silent: Again, an initial generalized statement (lines 76–78): the souls fly about singing and "become" the letters *D*, *I*, and *L* (withholding the full significance until the procedure is fully clear); then a more detailed analysis (lines 79–81), introducing a crucial detail: the punctuation of each new letter by the brief cessation of motion and by momentary silence.

82–87. O Pegasean goddess . . . these brief verses: The first invocation of a muse (or muses) since *Purg.* 29.37–42 (to all the muses, singling out Urania; cf. *Purg.* 1.7–12, to all the muses, singling out Calliope); the grand invocation in *Par.* 1. 13–36 is to the "good Apollo" (see our notes on all three passages). There has been discussion as to the specific muse addressed here, with some tendency to take the passage as addressed to all of them (following Benvenuto and Landino). The reference to Pegasus has not attracted much attention, but it is the focus of the invocation: the winged horse, born of the blood of the beheaded Medusa, who with a blow of his hoof released the Hippocrene [lit. "spring of the horse"] on Helicon (cf. the note to *Purg.* 29.40–41). The grand upsurge of the invocation derives from the idea of the flight of the great winged horse as that of poetry, mirroring the flight of the birdlike souls but greatly enlarging the symbol (as the imminent appearance of the eagle will also do).

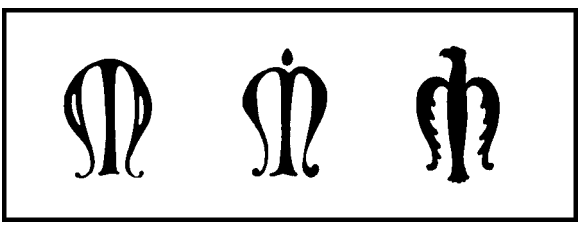

Figure 13. Transformation of M into lily into eagle

83–84. who make . . . cities and kingdoms: Poets give glory and immortality to cities and kingdoms by celebrating their justice, which is the focus of the cantos of Jupiter (Dante almost certainly has the *Aeneid* in mind here, perhaps also the Horace of the "Roman odes"). This passage should be closely connected with 17.118–20 and 124–42, where the emphasis is on denunciation of wickedness and abuse, as it is here on praise, but they are equally concerned with the "longevity" of poetic achievement.

85–87. illumine me . . . brief verses: Calling on the muses helps to emphasize the daring novelty of the poet's idea, and setting forth "their figures as I have conceived them," so that the power of the poetic muses (i.e., of the poet's ideas and words) may be evident, is very close to an explicit reference to the fictitious nature of the entire undertaking, as well as to the poet's virtuosity.

88–96. They showed themselves . . . ornamented with gold: At last the first goal of the passage, the spelling out of a celebrated phrase from Scripture.

88–90. They showed themselves . . . dictated to me: Another important explanatory remark: the pilgrim quickly understands what is happening and makes a conscious effort to piece the successive letters together. One notes, of course, that "our speech" (line 72) is not the vernacular but the high language of biblical and liturgical texts.

88–89. five times seven vowels and consonants: Thirty-five letters in all, then, spaces not being counted, words of eight, nine, three, nine, and six letters.

91–93. Diligite iustitiam [Love justice] . . . **qui iudicatis terram** [you who judge the earth]: (Wisdom 1.1), this famous opening of the book of Wisdom was included in the mural (painted 1338–40) by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the Sala della Pace in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. Accepted as canonical by the Roman Catholic Church, but not by the rabbis and Protestants, the book of Wisdom was probably written in the first century BCE (in Greek) in Alexandria, offering itself as written by Solomon (and closely related to the account of Solomon's prayer for wisdom in 3 Kings 3.5–12—see 13.91–111, with notes). It was particularly prized by early Christians, to whom it seemed to prophesy Christ's Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection.

94–96. Then they remained . . . adorned with gold: The pause on the final *M* is longer than the preceding ones, and the phrasing suggests that "Jove appeared" in some special way: the commentators suggest, probably correctly, that this last *M* stands for *Monarchia*, the principle of single rule. The planet

is said to be white in line 58, so that we may infer that all the letters have been gold (already implicit in the idea of fire, as in other heavens).

97–114. And I saw . . . with small motions: The last spectacular transformation of the show, and the last event narrated in the canto, in three stages: lines 97–99, the descent of a number of souls to the summit of the *M*; lines 100–111, the rising up of "more than a thousand lights" to combine with those descending so as to form the head and neck of an eagle; and lines 112–14, the small adjustments by others, so that what was formerly an *M* becomes the body and wings of a heraldic eagle. Three reminders are included (lines 99, 105, and 109–11) that these figurations are directly guided by God.

100–102. Then, as at the striking . . . take auguries: A homely but very vivid image. Dante's *agurarsi* [from Lat. *auguror*, to take oracles from birds] is hardly casual in this context, Jove's bird having been particularly significant to the Roman augurs [diviners] (note that lines 73–75 had introduced the flocks of flying birds). Dante is engaged in a particularly ambitious "augury."

103–5. I seemed to see . . . kindles them allotted: The number contributes a further suggestion, that of great size.

107–8. I saw the head . . . that articulated fire: The head and neck are formed by the souls that have just joined the others; special status is probably indicated by their *descending* or *flying up* to form the highest parts. The phrase "distinto foco" [articulated fire] indicates that the representation is relatively detailed.

109–11. He who portrays . . . form for nests: The general import is clear: God guides the souls in forming the eagle. But the bird imagery in line 111, "the power that is the form for nests," is puzzling: since birds cannot intuit intellectual entities like form, how do they build nests? The sense would seem to be that God's creative power ("the power that is the form") guides them in building their nests, as it does the souls forming the eagle (see Mattalia's excellent notes and our note to lines 115–17).

112–14. The other beatitudes . . . with small motions: The remark is perhaps required to remind the reader that the head and neck (line 107) are an addition to the original shape, which still remains.

113. to enlily themselves in the *M*: The first phase of the transformation of the *M* (lines 97–99), we are now told, gave it the shape of the Florentine lily

(see fig. 13). *Ingigliarsi* [to enlily themselves] is another of Dante's striking coinages (see the note to lines 133–36).

115–36. O sweet star . . . fisherman nor Pol: The rest of the canto is devoted to a passionate denunciation, written in the person of the poet, of the rulers and prelates responsible for the corruption and injustice prevalent on earth, attributed in lines 133–36 to avarice. After a conclusion drawn from what has just been seen, the exclamation has three parts, the first (lines 118–23) is addressed to God, the second (lines 124–29) to the souls just seen (or to all the blessed), the third (lines 130–36) to the pope. (Clement V, "the Gascon," died in 1314; his successor, John XXII, from Cahors, was pope 1316–34; never mentioned by Dante by name, he is targeted along with Clement V in 27.58, in the phrase "Cahorsans and Gascons" and is probably meant here; cf. the note to 17.88.)

115–17. O sweet star . . . that you begem: This is an important statement of Dante's astrological conception. The explicit logic of the exclamation is that the great number of souls ("how many [gems]") and their nature ("what [gems]"), i.e., the degree to which they reflect the influence of the planet, proves to him that whatever justice exists on earth is the result of the influence of the planet Jupiter. From Canto 8 we know the central importance, in God's providential government of the world, of astrological influence in counteracting heredity in the establishment of the native gifts of individuals (legible in their horoscopes as well as in their behavior). The souls in Jupiter, then, are "children" of that planet (it was the dominant influence—the "lord"—of their horoscopes). But lines 109–11 add a particularly interesting nuance: it seems that the children of Jupiter must be guided day by day by an impulse prior to rational thought, inherent in their natures and akin to the natural instincts of animals.

118–23. Therefore I beg . . . miracles and martyrdoms: Although couched in the third person, the appeal is obviously directed at God. Dante's "therefore" indicates that the conception of the power of Jupiter just expressed (see last note) makes it especially difficult to understand how corruption and injustice can prevail on earth, and particularly how they can so deeply threaten the Church.

118–19. the Mind that . . . and your power: God, ruling the celestial spheres by his direct influence on the angels who move them. The term *Mind* refers especially to the Logos.

120. the smoke that vitiates your shining: The influence of Jupiter is conceived of in terms of light ("shining" [*raggio*, lit. "ray"], line 120), which, like that of the sun, can be blocked by clouds or smoke (here metaphorical, developed further in lines 124–36).

121–22. so that yet again . . . within the Temple: "Yet again" refers to Matt. 21.12–13 (cf. Mark 11.15–18):

> And Jesus . . . cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the chairs of them that sold doves: and he saith unto them: My house shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves.

(Note the quasi quotation of "sold and bought in the temple" in line 122 (and cf. 17. 51), which links Boniface VIII with Judas.)

123. whose walls . . . miracles and martyrdoms: See the long denunciation of the papacy by saint Peter, in related terms, in 27.40–66, and cf. 24.97–111.

124–29. O army of Heaven . . . away from no one: The "army" is the Church Triumphant, including Christ, as well as the particular portion of it contemplated in Jupiter. Popes and prelates abuse their spiritual authority, using it as a weapon against political enemies. For the evil effects of their bad example, see *Purg.* 16.97–114.

127–29. In the past . . . away from no one: The reference is to the excommunication of political opponents, which denies them the Eucharistic bread (cf. 27.46–51).

130–36. But you who write . . . fisherman nor Pol: The addressee is now the pope, in all probability John XXII (see note to 115–36). Note that the emphatic anaphora of "O" (lines 115 and 124), addressing allies, is changed to the contemptuous "ma tu" (cf. the analogous rhetorical moves in the invective of *Purgatorio* 6, in lines 74, 76, 91, 97, 118, and 127, and the reproach of inconstancy, lines 142–47).

130. write only to strike out: The reference is to excommunications rescinded for money.

131–32. Peter and Paul . . . are still alive: Saints Peter and Paul were both martyred in Rome; Peter was buried in the cemetery on the Vatican hill, where the

basilica of saint Peter was eventually built. The "vine" is a traditional figure for the Church, based especially on John 15.1–5, especially verse 5: "I am the vine, you the branches." For the laying waste of the vine, see Canticle of Canticles 2.15, *Purg.* 32.118–23, with notes, and Manselli 1971.

133–36. My desire is so fixed . . . fisherman nor Pol: The pope is made to confess his greed with sardonic mockery. He "who wished to live alone, whom dancing led to martyrdom," is of course John the Baptist, whose head rewarded Salome's dance (Matt. 14.1–12), and whose image "seals" the florin (see the note to *Inf.* 30. 73–74).

136. I know not the fisherman nor Pol: "Fisherman" mocks Peter's humble origins, and "Polo" (a colloquial form common in both Italy and France) mocks Paul.

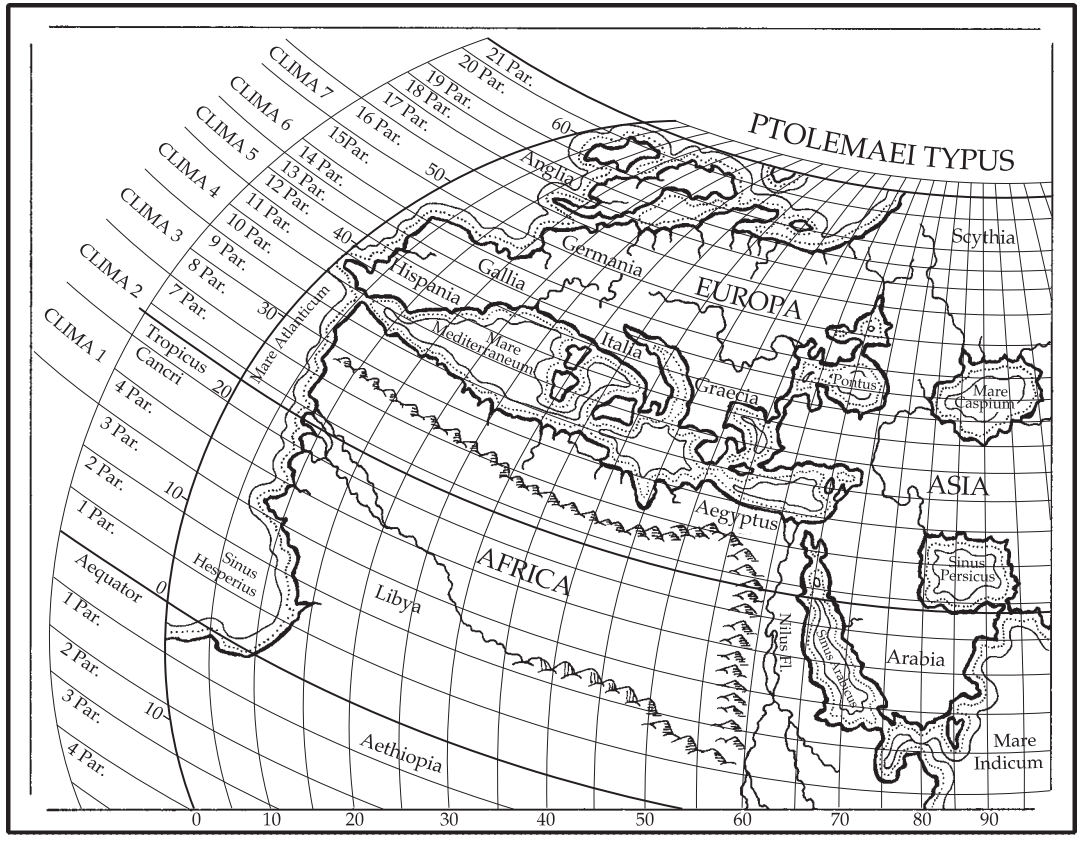

Figure 14. The Climata of the *Oikumenè*

CANTO 19

Parea dinanzi a me con l'ali aperte
la bella image che nel dolce *frui*
liete facevan l'anime conserte:
parea ciascuna rubinetto in cui
raggio di sole ardesse sì acceso
che ne' miei occhi rifrangesse lui.
E quel che mi convien ritrar testeso
non portò voce mai, né scrisse incostro,
né fu per fantasia già mai compreso:
ch' io vidi e anche udi' parlar lo rostro
e sonar ne la voce e *io* e *mio*,
quand' era nel concetto e *noi* e *nostro*.
E cominciò: "Per esser giusto e pio
son io qui essaltato a quella gloria
che non si lascia vincere a disio,
e in terra lasciai la mia memoria
sì fatta che le genti lì malvage
commendan lei, ma non seguon la storia."
Così un sol calor di molte brage
si fa sentir, come di molti amori
usciva solo un suon di quella image.
Ond' io appresso: "O perpetüi fiori
de l'etterna Letizia, che pur uno
parer mi fate tutti vostri odori,
solvetemi, spirando, il gran digiuno
che lungamente m'ha tenuto in fame,
non trovandoli in terra cibo alcuno.
Ben so io che, se 'n Cielo altro reame
la divina Giustizia fa suo specchio,
che 'l vostro non l'apprende con velame.

CANTO 19

Jupiter, continued: the Eagle: pilgrim's doubts about the just pagans—God's justice inscrutable—salvation always through Christ—denunciation of vicious rulers

Before me with open wings stood that image
made by the joyous souls woven together in their
sweet *frui*:
each was like a little ruby on which a sunbeam
shone so brightly that it refracted the whole sun
into my eyes.
And what I must now portray no voice ever
spoke, no ink wrote down, nor was it ever
conceived by any imagination:
for I saw and also heard the beak speaking,
and the voice sounding both *I* and *mine*, though
logically it was *we* and *ours*.
And it began: "For being just and merciful am I
here exalted to the glory beyond all desire
and on earth I left such a memory of me that
the wicked people there commend it, but they do
not imitate the story."
As one heat is felt from many coals, so from
many loves a single sound came forth from that
image.
So I then: "O perpetual flowers of the eternal
Gladness, who make all your perfumes seem but
one to me,
satisfy, breathing on me, the great lack that
has kept me hungering for so long, not finding
any food for it on earth.
Well do I know that, if the divine Justice makes
some other realm of Heaven its mirror, yours
does not apprehend it through a veil.

Sapete come attento io m'apparecchio
ad ascoltar, sapete qual è quello
dubbio che m'è digiun cotanto vecchio."
Quasi falcone ch' esce del cappello
move la testa e con l'ali si plaude,
voglia mostrando e faccendosi bello
vid' io farsi quel segno, che di laude
de la divina grazia era contesto,
con canti quai si sa chi là sù gaude.
Poi cominciò: "Colui che volse il sesto
a lo stremo del mondo e dentro ad esso
distinse tanto occulto e manifesto,
non poté suo valor sì fare impresso
in tutto l'universo che 'l suo Verbo
non rimanesse in infinito eccesso.
E ciò fa certo che 'l primo superbo,
che fu la somma d'ogne creatura,
per non aspettar lume, cadde acerbo,
e quinci appar ch' ogne minor natura
è corto recettacolo a quel bene
che non ha fine e sé con sé misura.
Dunque vostra veduta, che convene
essere alcun de' raggi de la Mente
di che tutte le cose son ripiene,
non pò da sua natura esser possente
tanto che suo Principio non discerna
molto di là da quel che l'è parvente.
Però ne la Giustizia sempiterna
la vista che riceve il vostro mondo
com' occhio per mare entro s'interna,
che, ben che da la proda veggia il fondo,
in pelago nol vede, e nondimeno
è lì, ma cela lui l'esser profondo.
Lume non è se non vien dal Sereno
che non si turba mai, anzi è tenèbra
od ombra di carne o suo veleno.
Assai t'è mo aperta la latebra
che t'ascondeva la Giustizia viva
di che facei question cotanto crebra,

You know how intently I ready myself to hear,
you know what doubt is such an old hunger in
me."
Like a falcon released from its hood, that
moves its head and applauds with its wings,
showing desire, and making itself beautiful,
so did I see that sign become, woven of
praises of God's grace, with singing known only
by those who rejoice up there.
Then it began: "He who revolved the
compasses about the limit of the world, and
within it distinguished so much, both hidden and manifest,
could not so impress his worth on all the
universe, that his Word did not remain infinitely
beyond it.
And this is proved by the first proud one, the
highest of all creatures, who for not awaiting light
fell unripe,
and hence it is clear that every lesser nature is
a shallow receptacle for the Good that has no end
and measures itself by itself alone.
Therefore your sight, which can only be one of
the rays of the Mind with which all things are
filled,
cannot by its nature be so strong that it does
not discern its Beginning to be far beyond what it
can see.
Thus into the sempiternal Justice the sight
conferred in your world penetrates only as far as
the eye does into the sea,
for, though close to shore you may see the
bottom, on the open sea you cannot, and
nonetheless it is there, but hidden by being deep.
There is no light unless it come from the
Serene that is never clouded: otherwise it is
shadow of the flesh or its poison.
Sufficiently open to you now is the lair that hid
the living Justice from you, about which you
made such frequent question,

ché tu dicevi: 'Un uom nasce a la riva
de l'Indo, e quivi non è chi ragioni
di Cristo né chi legga né chi scriva,
e tutti suoi voleri e atti buoni
sono, quanto ragione umana vede,
sanza peccato in vita o in sermoni.
Muore non battezzato e sanza fede:
ov' è questa giustizia che 'l condanna?
ov' è la colpa sua se ei non crede?'
Or tu chi se', che vuo' sedere a scranna
per giudicar di lungi mille miglia
con la veduta corta d'una spanna?
Certo a colui che meco s'assottiglia,
se la Scrittura sovra voi non fosse,
da dubitar sarebbe a maraviglia.
Oh terreni animali! oh menti grosse!
La prima Volontà, ch'è da sé buona,
da sé, ch'è sommo Ben, mai non si mosse.
Cotanto è giusto quanto a lei consuona:
nullo creato bene a sé la tira,
ma essa, radïando, lui cagiona."
Quale sovresso il nido si rigira
poi c' ha pasciuti la cicogna i figli,
e come quel ch' è pasto la rimira:
cotal si fece, e sì leväi i cigli,
la benedetta imagine, che l'ali
movea sospinte da tanti consigli.
Roteando cantava, e dicea: "Quali
son le mie note a te, che non le 'ntendi,
tal è il giudicio etterno a voi mortali."
Poi si quetaro quei lucenti incendi
de lo Spirito Santo ancor nel segno
che fé i Romani al mondo reverendi,
esso ricominciò: "A questo regno
non salì mai chi non credette 'n Cristo,
né pria né poi ch' el si chiavasse al legno.
Ma vedi: molti gridan 'Cristo, Cristo!'
che saranno in giudicio assai men *prope*
a lui che tal che non conosce Cristo,

for you would say: 'A man is born on the banks of the Indus, and no one is there to speak of Christ or read or write of him,

and all his desires and acts are good, as far as human reason can see, without sin in life or in word.

He dies unbaptized and without our faith: where is this justice that condemns him? where is his fault if he does not believe?'

Now who are you, who wish to sit on the bench and judge from a thousand miles away, with sight as short as a handbreadth?

Certainly for the one who matches wits with me, if the Scriptures were not over you, there would be wondrous cause for doubt.

Oh earth-bound animals! oh gross minds! The first Will, good in and of itself, the highest Good, has never changed.

That is just which is consonant with it; no created goods draw it, but it by radiating causes them."

As above its nest the stork circles about, after it has fed its young, and as the one fed gazes up at it:

so the blessed image did, and so I lifted my brow, moving its wings borne up by the counsel of so many.

Wheeling it sang, saying: "Such as my notes are to you, who cannot understand them, so is the eternal judgment to you mortals."

After those shining fires of the Holy Spirit grew still again in the emblem that caused the Romans to be revered by the world,

it began once more: "To this kingdom no one has ever risen who did not believe in Christ, either before or after he was nailed to the wood.

But see: many cry 'Christ, Christ!' who at the judgment will be much less *prope* to him, than someone who does not know Christ,

e tai Cristian dannerà l'Etïòpe,
quando si partiranno i due collegi,
l'uno in etterno ricco e l'altro inòpe.
Che poran dir li Perse a' vostri regi
come vedranno quel volume aperto
nel qual si scrivon tutti suoi dispregi?
Lì si vedrà, tra l'opere d'Alberto,
quella che tosto moverà la penna,
per che 'l regno di Praga fia diserto.
Lì si vedrà il duol che sovra Senna
induce, falseggiando la moneta,
quel che morrà di colpo di cotenna.
Lì si vedrà la superbia ch'asseta,
che fa lo Scotto e l'Inghilese folle
sì che non può soffrir dentro a sua meta.
Vedrassi la lussuria e 'l viver molle
di quel di Spagna e di quel di Boemme,
che mai valor non conobbe né volle.
Vedrassi al Ciotto di Ierusalemme
segnata con un *i* la sua bontate
quando 'l contrario segnerà un emme.
Vedrassi l'avarizia e la viltate
di quei che guarda l'isola del foco,
ove Anchise finì la lunga etate,
e a dare ad intender quanto è poco,
la sua scrittura fian lettere mozze
che noteranno molto in parvo loco.
E parranno a ciascun l'opere sozze
del barba e del fratel, che tanto egregia
nazione e due corone han fatte bozze.
E quel di Portogallo e di Norvegia
lì si conosceranno, e quel di Rascia
che male ha visto il conio di Vinegia.
Oh beata Ungheria, se non si lascia
più malmenare! e beata Navarra,
se s'armasse del monte che la fascia!
E creder de' ciascun che già, per arra
di questo, Niccosïa e Famagosta
per la lor bestia si lamenti e garra,
che dal fianco de l'altre non si scosta."

and such Christians will be damned by the Ethiope, when the two gatherings will be separated, one rich eternally and the other destitute.

What will the Persians be able to say to your kings, when they shall see that volume opened in which all their dispraise is being written?

There will be seen, among Albert's works, that which the pen will soon record, by which the kingdom of Prague will be laid waste.

There will be seen the grief caused along the Seine by falsifying the coin, by him who will die from the blow of the boar's hide.

There will be seen the thirsty pride that so maddens the Scot and the Englishman that neither can bear to stay within his bounds.

We shall see the lust and the soft living of him of Spain and him of Bohemia, who never knew worth or willed it.

We shall see the Cripple of Jerusalem marked with an *I* for his goodness, while an *M* will mark the opposite.

We shall see the avarice and cowardice of him who rules the island of fire, where Anchises ended his long life,

and to give you to understand how little he is worth, his writing will be truncated letters, noting much in little space.

And all will see the filthy deeds of his uncle and his brother, who have cuckolded so excellent a nation and two crowns.

And those of Portugal and Norway will be known there, and he of Rascia, who saw to his harm the coinage of Venice.

Oh happy Hungary, if it lets itself be abused no further! and happy Navarre, were it protected by the mount that girds it!

And we must all believe that it is a foretaste of this, that Nicosia and Famagosta complain and prattle about their beast,

who does not stray from beside the others."

NOTES

1–21. Before me with open wings . . . from that image: The skywriting in the planet Jupiter concludes in the form of the eagle of the Roman empire, of monarchy, and of the world (*mondo*; see 20.8 and note). For the eagle in the poem previously, see *Purg.* 9.21, 32.109–17 and notes; *Par.* 1.46–48; 6.1, 28–33; 18.107–8 and passim, and notes. For Justinian in Mercury, the eagle signifies the "living justice" that makes him speak (6.82, 6.88–90 and notes, and note to lines 11–12). As a visual image of how Jupiter influences its "children" to be just, the eagle is like the idea of justice (see *Conv.* 2.4.5–6, where Dante discusses Platonic "forms" or universal ideas). It also represents the assembly of the just, for right rule was for Dante historically embodied in the Romans (*Mon.* 2.3.1–3, 2.5.4–5, 2.6.11). Eagle, empire, and emperor are closely related; see 20.56–57 and notes, and *Mon.* 2.10.8 and 2.11.5–6.

The eagle speaks thirty-six terzinas in this canto as well as in the next, 216 lines in all: compare Justinian, who speaks the entire sixth canto (142 lines). For emphasis on the number six, see note 6.1–142; see also 20.31–78, 99, and 26.113–42 and notes. Silent in Canto 6, Beatrice is silent in this sixth planet also.

1–6. Before me with open wings . . . sun into my eyes: Jupiter reflects the light of the sun, often mentioned in this sphere (at 18.105, 19.6, 20.1, 20.31; and cf. 14.46 and note), because the sun is "leader and moderator" of the universe (*SS* 4.2). The image of the eagle introduces the theme of the corporate unity of just souls, or the many and the one (repeated in 20.1–12); see Additional Note 2.

1. Before me with open wings: The image recalls the open arms of the cross (*Purg.* 3.119–23 and note; *Par.* 14.97–111 and notes); see also Ps. 16.8, alluded to at 6.4–9 (and see 20.37–39 and note). For the compatibility of the dominant images of the middle cantos of *Paradiso* (circle, cross, and eagle) see Additional Note 8.

Foster notes that the angelic hierarchy governing this sphere, the Principalities, was assigned by Dante to contemplate the Son, the Logos or Word of God, in himself (*Conv.* 2.5.7–11). See note to lines 40–45.

2–3. made by the joyous souls . . . their sweet *frui* [fruition]: See Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 11.25 and *De doctrina christiana*, 1.8: "Fruition is to adhere in love to some thing for its own sake." These blessed souls enjoy the object of their love,

justice (see *Purg.* 18.32–33 and note), as counseled by the phrase inscribed in this heaven (18.91–93 and note). See *ST* Ia 2ae q. 11 a. 3.

4–6. each was like a little ruby . . . sun into my eyes: Gems shine in the sun because they are diaphanous (prone to receive light); cf. *Conv.* 3.7.3. That each creature is a ray of the first cause (cf. *Ep.*13.70) is often recalled in *Paradiso* (see 19.53, 19.90, 26.33 and notes). The liturgy of the Common of Saints states that "the just shall shine like lilies" [*fulgebunt iusti sicut lilium*]; see 18.113 and note.

7–9. And what I must . . . by any imagination: See 1 Cor. 2.9, where Paul, unfolding the "wisdom of God in a mystery," hints at what God prepares for the faithful: "But, as it is written [Isa. 64.4]: that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him. But to us God hath revealed them, by his Spirit."

10. for I saw and also heard the beak speaking: Latin *rostrum* [beak] is the etymon of *rostro* here. Dante could have read in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* (*Etym.* 18.15) that the prows [*rostra*] of defeated Carthaginian galleys stood in the forum, the site of Roman legal and political oratory. The eagle speaks for the just (line 13), and, since the collective speaks as if it were a living individual, the eagle is an instance of *prosopopoeia*—personification. See *VN* 25 and 1 Cor. 2.9, quoted in the preceding note.

11–12. and the voice sounding . . . it was *we* and *ours*: The grammatical singular represents the plurality of the just. Compare the corporate identity of the eagle to earlier instances of the body politic in the poem (see *Inf.* 28.35, 142 and notes, and *Inferno* Additional Notes 2, 12, 13) and in Dante's other works (cf. *DVE* 1.18.5). On the unity of wills in the ideal empire, see especially *Mon.* 1.16.

In Roman imperial tradition, the *lex regia* transferred legislative authority from the Roman people to the emperor (*Institutes* 1.1; *Digest*, Prologue). Although Dante held that the emperor drew his authority from election by God, the subjection of the whole world to Rome, as providentially decreed, meant that the emperor represented not only the Roman people, but all mankind: "Christ acknowledged by his action that the edict of Augustus [imposing the census], since he embodied the authority of the Romans [*Romanorum auctoritate fungentis*], was legitimate" (*Mon.* 2.10.8). This idea had consequences for Dante's view of the Atonement (see 6.82–90, 7.19–21, 40–45 and notes; also Kantorowicz 1957; Armour 1997.

13–18. And it began . . . imitate the story: The "memory" of the eagle on earth is the glory that resulted from the Roman conquest of empire (*Mon.* 2.2–9, *Conv.* 4.4–5), and from the tradition of Roman law that Justinian compiled, inspired by the eagle (see 6.7–12). The corpus of laws is an instance of multiple voices (those of the Roman jurists) unified in one voice: the laws issued "from the mouth of the emperor" (*Institutes*, proem); they are his "art" or "work" on behalf of the whole world (see 6.12–13 and note); and see note to lines 40–45.

13. just and merciful: The shift from collective to individual is made again in the eagle's use of the singular: justice and mercy (or piety) are found in each individual, and in the collective as well. The majesty of the empire, Dante writes at *Mon.* 2.5.5: "is born from the fountainhead of mercy" [*de fonte nascitur pietatis*]" (see 32.117 and note). These virtues were embodied in Aeneas, the ancestor of Caesar (*Aen.* 1.544–45, cited at *Mon.* 2.3.8): "no man more just / in piety . . ." [*quo iustior alter / nec pietate fuit*]); and by the emperor Trajan (*Purg.* 10.91–93 and note). The exhortation at 18.113 was ritually spoken to the Holy Roman Emperor at his coronation: "May you love justice, compassion and right judgment" [*iustitiam, misericordiam et iudicium diligas*] (Elze 1960). For justice and mercy cooperating in the Atonement, see 7.103–20, and note to 7.52–120.

13. just: This is the first use of "just" in the canto, echoed at line 88. "Justice" is found at lines 29, 58, 68, and 77, and "judgment" at lines 99 and 107; "judge" is at line 80—nine uses in all, followed by five related terms in the next canto.

17–18. the wicked people . . . imitate the story: The malicious praise Roman achievements but do not follow the example of Roman virtue and justice.

19–21. As one heat is felt . . . from that image: A mixed-metaphorical simile: the middle term is the love radiating from the eagle, previously compared to the heat from many coals—which is felt—and subsequently said to produce a unitary sound (a voice) radiating from an *image*. Lines 22–25 bring in smell as well, leading up to the pilgrim's hunger (line 25); cf. 1 Cor. 2.9, quoted in the note to lines 7–9.

22–148. So I then . . . beside the others: The balance of the canto, and the next one as well, takes up the question of whether virtuous non-Christians can be saved, a problem Dante returns to often in the poem (e.g. *Inf.* 4.34–42, 8.128–30, 12.41–43 and notes; *Purg.* 3.22–45, 21–22 and notes, and *Inter cantica* there).

22–33. So I then . . . old hunger in me: "Lack" (line 25), "hunger" (line 33), and "hungering" (line 26) recall that the utterances of Wisdom (cf. 1 Cor. 2.9–10 in note to lines 7–12) are a form of food (cf. Prov. 9.1–5; and see 2.10–12, 23.1–15 and notes; *Purg.* 13.27 and note; and see Durling 1981a).

28–30. Well do I know . . . through a veil: Commentators take this as referring to Saturn, the sphere just above, governed by the angelic order of the Thrones (named the custodians of God's judgments at 9.61–63). For the association of the Thrones with judgment, see *ST* 1a q. 108 a. 6. For angels as mirrors, see *Ep.* 13.60.

34–39. Like a falcon . . . who rejoice up there: The bird of justice is now like a hunting falcon, unhooded and keen to fly after its quarry. First a "beak" [*rostro*] of "souls woven together" (line 3), the eagle is now a weave of voices [*contesto*, line 38]; see note to lines 11–12.

40–66. Then it began . . . or its poison: Before the pilgrim's question is voiced, the eagle circumscribes the understanding of mortals: as a mere single ray of the divine Mind (see *Ep.* 13.70, 72, cited in notes to 1.4), the human mind cannot penetrate the judgments of the first Principle (cf. *VN* 12.11–12). Foster 1976 points out that the passage deploys four syllogisms: the conclusion of the first, that God transcends his creation (lines 40–45), is the premise to the second, on the fall of Lucifer (46–48), and this to a third, that creatures are inadequate to receive the infinite goodness of God (49–51), from which it follows that God's reality exceeds our understanding, and so also does his justice (58–63). The contrast between the shallowness of creatures and the depth of God is reiterated: God's reality is "hidden" (line 42), the Word is "beyond" (line 45); Lucifer is "unripe" (line 48) and creatures are "shallow" (line 50); the Origin is "far beyond" (line 57), and Justice hidden by the deep (line 63); the flesh is a "shadow" or "poison" (line 66). See Additional Note 2.

40–42. Then it began . . . hidden and manifest: Dante employs the traditional image of God as architect, marking out the creation with compasses in the company of Wisdom, or the Word: that is Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, whom Augustine termed "God's art" ("ars quaedam Dei," *De Trinitate* 6.10). See Prov. 8.27, quoted by Dante at *Conv.* 3.15.16: "When he prepared the heavens, I [Wisdom] was present: when with a certain law and compass he enclosed the depths." "Impress" (line 43) implies the metaphor of the seal and the wax (see 13.67–69 and notes). Speaking elsewhere of history as the trace of God's will, Dante describes how a hidden cause (God, the seal) produces visible effects (the image in the wax, the world) (cf. *Mon.* 2.2.8).

The rule of the Roman Empire is also an "art;" see note to lines 13–18, and *Conv.* 4.9.10–14. Dante found support for the idea in *Aen.* 6.847–53, quoted in *Mon.* 2.6.9: "Your arts shall be: to impose the ways of peace, spare subject peoples, and subdue the proud." See also 16.51 and note, and Additional Note 2.

40. the compasses: The compass is called in Italian a *sesto* [sixth], because any extension of it (as the radius of a circle) will be the length of the sides of the hexagon inscribed in that circle.

42. distinguished so much, both hidden and manifest: The phrasing echoes the Nicene Creed: "I believe in one God…maker of all things visible and invisible" (see p. 664, and 24.130–132, 139–44 and notes), referring to the visible reality of nature and the invisible world of the spirit; cf. *Mon.* 2.7.1: "Divine judgment in earthly affairs is sometimes revealed to men, and sometimes it remains hidden."

46–51. And this is proved…by itself alone: Compare *ST* 1a q. 12 a. 4: "The created intellect cannot see God in his essence, unless God through his grace join himself to the created intellect." Had Lucifer awaited God's perfecting grace, he would have been the apex of creation; but rushing in his pride to seize it with his own power, fell "unripe" (for this adjective, see *Inf.* 25.18 and note). Cf. *DVE* 1.2.4: "The perverse angels did not wish to await divine help."

49–51. and hence it is clear…by itself alone: Cf. *Conv.* 2.5.11: "The light that only itself sees itself completely" (cf. *Par.* 33.124–26); and 4.9.3: "The first goodness, which is God, which solely with His infinite capacity comprehends the infinite." See Aquinas, *CG* 1.69, and *ST* 1a q. 25 a. 5: "Divine goodness is an end which exceeds beyond proportion created things."

53–54. the Mind with which all things are filled: For Wisdom 1.7 and Jer. 23.24 as sources for this passage, see *Ep.* 13.62, and *Par.* 1.1–3 and note.

57. far beyond what it can see: The intellect grasps that the reality of God lies beyond what it can see and understand, indeed beyond the visible; the idea presupposes Romans 1.20, cited by Dante at *Ep.* 5.23 and *Mon.* 2.2.8, a passage that, in outlining how faith can arise, lays the basis for the ensuing discussion; see Additional Note 14. And see *Mon.* 2.7.4–5, cited in note to lines 70–78.

58–63. Thus into the sempiternal…hidden by being deep: See Ps. 35.7: "Thy justice is as the mountains of God, thy judgments are a great deep." Cf. *Par.* 7.94, 21.94–95.

64–66. There is no light . . . poison of the flesh: see Rom. 6.19, 2 Cor. 7.1, on the "infirmity" or "defilement" of the flesh. At *Conv.* 4.21.8 Dante writes of the need for the intellect to be "abstracted and freed from every corporeal shadow" (see Vasoli's notes); for "poison" see *Ep.* 6.22 ("cupidity . . . flattering with poisonous whispering); also *Mon.* 1.11.13, 3.16.4.

67–99. Sufficiently open . . . judgment to you mortals: The eagle voices the pilgrim's question about virtuous pagans, and disqualifies him as a mortal of limited vision who engages in sophistries despite the guidance of Scripture; no discord between justice and the divine will is possible (see 3.70–87 and notes), but divine judgments exceed human understanding.

67–69. Sufficiently open . . . such frequent question: In the eagle's comparison, the truth of justice dwells in a lair from which it must be drawn out (*latèbra* rhymes with *tenèbra*, "darkness"). Compare Dante's proposition for his exposition of monarchy: "I propose to draw it forth from where it lies hidden [*enucleare latibulis*]" (*Mon.* 1.1.5); see also 4.127 and note, and Additional Note 2.

70–78. for you would say . . . he does not believe: At the center of the canto, Dante asks why a virtuous soul who lives beyond reach of the Christian message should be excluded from salvation because unbaptized. The problem is stated in the same terms at *Mon.* 2.7.2–5 (cf. *ST* 2a 2ae q. 2. a. 7, Additional Note 2). The predicament might apply to Dante's Virgil (apparently not saved) and to Cato (who is; see *Purg.* 1.31–109, 37–39 and notes, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 1).

70–71. a man is born on the banks of the Indus: The Indus, which flows through present-day Pakistan, was in antiquity India's western border: Alexander the Great halted his conquests just beyond it; thus the river marks the easternmost reach of classical civilization. Western theologians in Dante's day did have some knowledge of the high ethical standards of the Brahmans; see Hahn 1977.

72. speak of Christ or read or write of him: The Gospel was communicated by preaching and by writings (see *Purg.* 22.79–81, *Par.* 24.91–96, with notes). A teacher is necessary because "faith then cometh from hearing [*fides ex auditu*]" (Rom. 10.17), and there can be no culpability in not adhering to a Gospel that is never heard (see Rom. 10.15: "How shall they hear, without a preacher?").

74. as far as human reason can see: Cf. *Consol.* 4.pr.6.32, cited at 20.67–72.

77. where is this justice that condemns him? The eagle poses the pilgrim's question in confrontational terms; cf. Rom. 9.19: "Thou wilt say therefore to me: Why doth he find fault?" Some commentators take the pilgrim's question to be impartiment, and the eagle's response (lines 79–84) appears to bear this out (recall the earlier mention of Lucifer's impatience). But in the next canto the issue raised by the pilgrim is granted more scope and its seriousness acknowledged.

79–82. Now who are you . . . matches wits with me: See Rom. 9.19–20, in reproof of those who would challenge God's decrees. "O man, who art though that repliest against God? (see also Job 38.2: "Who is this who wrappeth up sentences in unskilful words").

85–90. Oh earthbound animals . . . by radiating causes them: The apostrophe echoes *Consol.* 3.pr.3.1: "You too, earthbound creatures, dream an image, albeit faint, of your origin." Dante reproaches similar inquiries into the purposes of Providence at *Conv.* 4.5.9 and *Quaest.* 22.77. For the emanationist language (God creates the world with the outpouring of his creative Word into the universe) see 1.2–3 and note, and Additional Notes 10 and 11.

88–90. That is just which is consonant . . . by radiating causes them: Cf. *Mon.* 2.2.5: "In the created world right is simply the image of the divine will; and thus it follows that whatever is not in harmony with divine will cannot be right, and whatever is in harmony with divine will is by that very fact right."

91–99. As above its nest . . . eternal judgment to you mortals: The eagle is compared to a mother bird that has fed its young, and the pilgrim raises his head as fledglings do (cf. *Purg.* 25.10, also mentioning storks, and note; see also *Par.* 23.1–21 and note). The eagle's circling can be seen as a form of understanding (see Additional Notes 3 and 13), confirmed by the singing that accompanies the circling as the music of the spheres accompanies their motion. The eagle illuminates the pilgrim as the sphere of Jupiter does the cosmos, but its answer reiterates the rightness of divine judgments, without further justification.

91. As above its nest the stork: After eagle and falcon, a third bird species is mentioned (and see 20.73–78 and note). Storks were known to make a sound like speech by clacking their beaks (see *Inf.* 32.36 and note). As the supreme bird, the eagle comprehends other species, as higher orders of angels comprehend lower.

100–148. After those shining fires . . . beside the others: The eagle reiterates that there is no salvation without faith in Christ (Heb. 11.6; see also Acts 4.12,

and *ST* 3a q. 68 a. 1). But many who seem not to know Christ will be saved, while many who expect salvation will be rejected. Dante's fullest evocation of the Last Judgment before the Empyrean (see 30.37–45, 128–32 and notes) takes aim at secular rulers who have governed badly because of personal vices.

100–111. After those shining fires . . . and the other destitute: The eagle's most profound revelation frames the Last Judgment, the final act of justice, in Biblical terms (see notes to lines 106–8, 109–11, 110–11). The name of Christ appears three times in identical rhyme to suggest his influence over past, present, and future—his saving act of justice, the Atonement, at the center of history, is foreseen by faith before it occurs (see note to lines 103–5), and he will come at the end of time to judge (lines 106–7). This is the third of four identical *Cristo*-rhymes in *Paradiso* (see 12.71, 73, 75, and 14.104, 106, 108 [as here]; see also 32.83, 85, 87, and notes, and Additional Notes 4 and 8); their frequency and placement reflects Philippians 2.9: "For which cause [the Incarnation and Crucifixion] God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above all names."

100–102. After those shining fires . . . revered by the world: The eagle prefaces its answer with mention of the Holy Spirit, the Love that authorizes speech spoken in its name (cf. *Purg.* 24.50–52 and note), here dictating to the eagle of justice that made the Roman Empire worthy of reverence. *Mondo* [world] is another candidate for what is signified by the *M* concluding *terram* (18.94–96 and note; cf. the Roman Empire as "glory of the world," 27.61–66 and note). See 6.28–36 and note, and Additional Note 2.

103–5. it began once more . . . nailed to the wood: Dividing the faithful into groups living before and after the Crucifixion [*pria . . . poi*], Dante applies a traditional gloss on Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21.9): that some preceded and some followed him signifies that the faithful would be found both before and after Christ. Reiterated at 20.103–5 (note identical line numbers) and 32.19–27, the distinction was anticipated by the acts of the Roman eagle in reference to the Crucifixion at 6.82–83 ("what the emblem . . . had done earlier [*fatto*], and was to do [*fatturo*] later"), and again at 13.40–42 (see note), also referring to the Crucifixion. See Additional Note 4.

106–8. But see . . . does not know Christ: Cf. Matt. 7.22–23: "Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name, and cast out devils in thy name, and work many miracles in thy name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity." See also Matt. 8.11–12.

109–11. and such Christians . . . the other destitute: Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire, destroyed in 611 BCE. See Matt. 12.41–42: "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for they repented at the teaching of Jonah [Jonah 2.1], and a greater than Jonah is here" (3 Kings 10.1–7). In the New Testament, Peter discovers exemplary faith in the Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 10.35): "In every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh justice, is acceptable to him"; see also Matt. 8.5–10.

Thought to be the southernmost habitable region (see *Inf.* 24.89, *Purg.* 26.21 and notes), Ethiopia was home to the eunuch "of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians," converted by the apostle Philip in Acts 8.27–39, and also to Solomon's admirer the Queen of Sheba, associated in biblical exegesis with the "black but comely" spouse of Canticle of Canticles 1.4.

110–11. when the two gatherings . . . the other destitute: Matt. 25.31–46, on the Last Judgment, quoted in part by the angel at the entrance to Eden (*Purg.* 27.58; cf. also note to *Purg.* 22.82–87), underlies the judgment scene here. The next canto includes a contrasting enumeration of souls saved.

112–48. What will the Persians . . . beside the others: In the last dozen terzinas the book of God's judgments is opened; as the events mentioned took place after 1300, they are understood to be prophecies. The list is a political and geographic survey of Europe, beginning with the Holy Roman Empire and the French monarchy; Jerusalem is mentioned at the midpoint, followed by Sicily, the arena of Angevin and Aragonese ambition. Lesser, peripheral kingdoms follow, and Cyprus, an island like Sicily near the center, concludes the list.

112–13. What will the Persians be able to say to your kings: The Persian Empire returned the Jews to Jerusalem after their Babylonian captivity and helped to reconstruct the Temple (see Daniel 6.1–3, 9.1–2, 10–11; 3 Esdras 2.1–6). Wisdom 6.1–6 reiterates, in stronger terms, the counsel of Wisdom 1.1 inscribed in Jupiter (see 18.91–93 and note); it suggests what wise Persians might say (Carroll).

113–14. when they shall see . . . is being written: See Apoc. 20.12: "And another scroll was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the scrolls, according to their works." Dante's lines include an echo of lines from the *Dies irae*, a sequence written in the mid-thirteenth century and attributed to the Franciscan Thomas of Celano, that became part of the Mass for the dead (Barnes 1995):

Liber scriptus proferetur
in quo totum continetur,
unde mundus iudicetur. (lines 13–15)
[The written book will be shown,
in which everything is recorded
from which the world will be judged.]

Dante treats the book of judgment as a ledger, a book format familiar to commercially minded Florentines. The vertical acrostic in lines 115–41 resembles the reiterated initial formulas for account-book entries; these also used abbreviations (see lines 133–35). Note the fiscal lexicon: the saved are "rich," the damned "destitute" (lines 111–12); coinage is twice mentioned (119 and 140), as is numerical notation (127–29) and the metaphor of the deposit (*arra*, line 145). See 24.83–85, 85–87 and notes, and Steinberg 2007.

115–41. There will be seen . . . the coinage of Venice: The verse-head acrostic, read vertically, spells out an inscription (three instances of each letter beginning consecutive terzinas) of the word *LVE*, meaning "pestilence" (cf. the acrostic on the terrace of pride, *Purg.* 12.25–63 and note). The nine terzinas of the acrostic refer to thirteen sovereigns, of which Charles II, the chief living Angevin, is seventh and midmost; three more are implicit in the two terzinas that follow.

115–17. There will be seen . . . will be laid waste: First is Albert, the Holy Roman emperor attacked by Dante in *Purg.* 6.97–102 (see note). Envious of his brother-in-law Wenceslaus II, king of Bohemia (see line 125), Albert sought to make him renounce his claim to the throne of Hungary in favor of Charles Robert, eldest son of Charles Martel (see lines 142–44, 8.34–148, 9.1–9 and notes). The ensuing war devastated Bohemia in 1304.

116. that which the pen will soon record: The pen of God's recording angel, as in Ps. 44.2: "My tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly"; cf. 6.63.

118–20. There will be seen . . . the boar's hide: Next is Philip IV, the Fair, the "plague of France" (*Purg.* 7.109 and note), never explicitly named by Dante but chief object of the invective at *Purg.* 20.85–93 (see note). After being defeated by the Flemings at Courtrai, Philip created hardship in his realm when he devalued the currency to finance further campaigns in Flanders (1302). He was killed in 1314 when his horse, startled by a wild boar running between its legs, threw him (Villani 10.66). See lines 136–38.

121–26. There will be seen . . . knew worth or willed it: Pride and folly have caused the wars between Edward I of England and Robert the Bruce of Scotland (for "bounds" see *Purg.* 14.143–51 and note); Ferdinand IV of Castile and Wenceslaus II of Bohemia bask in ease and lechery (cf. *Purg.* 7.101–2).

127–29. We shall see the Cripple . . . mark the opposite: Named for of his lameness, the "cripple" is Charles II of Anjou and Naples, who claimed the title of king of Jerusalem, though the city was retaken by Saladin in 1190. The title fell to Charles through inheritance from his father, Charles I of Anjou, who had secured it through purchase in 1272, after it fell to the Angevins upon forfeiture by the heirs of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen. Dante reviles Charles II on several occasions (cf. *Purg.* 7.119–20, 20.79–81 and notes)

The initial *I* of Jerusalem [*Ierusalem*] tallies Charles's goodness, its final *M* his evil: sharp irony, considering Charles's hollow claim to the title.

130–35. We shall see the avarice . . . much in little space: Small letters will record the fecklessness, and leave room to fit in the misdeeds, of Frederick II of Aragon (reigned 1296–1337), often denounced by Dante (cf. *Purg.* 7.119–20; *Conv.* 4.6.20, *DVE* 1.12.5). After the death of Henry VII in 1313, Frederick, whose ancestors had seized Sicily from the Angevins in 1282 (see note to 8.73–75), deserted the Ghibelline cause and made peace with Charles II.

131–32. him who rules the island . . . ended his long life: Sicily is identified by its volcano, Etna (cf. 8.67–72 and note). After the death of his father Anchises (*Aen.* 3.707–10), Aeneas honored him with funeral games in Sicily (*Aeneid* 5), a show of reverence that shames the impiety of current sovereigns.

136–38. And all will see . . . and two crowns: Frederick of Aragon's uncle, James, had inherited the Balearic Isles in 1276 upon the death of his father, James I of Aragon. In 1284, to advance other claims, and in alliance with Philip III of France, James contended with his brother Pedro III of Aragon. James lost his throne, but regained it through a pact in 1295 involving his nephew James II of Aragon, Philip IV of France, and Charles II of Naples. The brother of Frederick II of Aragon was James II of Aragon, who yielded Sicily to Charles II; but Frederick held on and was crowned King of Trinacria (Sicily; cf. *Purg.* 7.119 and note).

137–38. who have cuckolded . . . and two crowns: The crowns of Aragon and Majorca have been dishonored (see *Purg.* 3.112–16 and note). The coarse terms for "uncle" [*barba*] and "cuckolded" [*fatte bozze*] lower the level of style.

139. And those of Portugal and Norway: King Dionysus (Dinís) of Portugal (reigned 1270–1325) was a great king, the founder of the University of Coimbra (1290). The commercial ventures that curbed his crusading zeal, the civil war with his heir, Alfonso IV, or the profit he gained from suppression of the Templars in 1312 (cf. *Purg.* 20.91–93 and note) may have drawn Dante's disapproval. Norway was an independent kingdom at this time; Dante refers to Hakon V (1299–1319) or perhaps his older brother Eric II (1280–1299).

140–41. and he of Rascia . . . coinage of Venice: This refers to Stephan Urosh II, king of Rascia (1282–1321). Named after its capital, Raska, the country included parts of modern Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, and Dalmatia. Stephan profited from the similarity of Venetian silver currency to his debased coinage, forcing Venice to legislate against it (1282; see *Inf.* 30.73–74 and note). See also 31.103 and note.

142–44. Oh happy Hungary . . . the mount that girds it: The acrostic complete, Dante suggests that better times await Hungary. The indicative mood ("lets itself") means these hopes would be realized: at the death of Andrew III of Hungary in 1301, Hungary, which should have reverted by right to Charles Martel's son, Charles Robert (see 8.64 and note), finally fell to him in 1308 after bitter struggles. Though similar, the construction used for Navarre is in the counterfactual subjunctive (*s'armasse* [were it protected]), meaning that hopes for that region would fail: though Navarre was well ruled from 1274 to 1304 by Jeanne, daughter of Henry of Champagne (see *Purg.* 7.104–11) and wife to King Philip IV the Fair, it was annexed to France by her son Louis in 1314 soon after his father's death.

145–48. And we must all believe . . . beside the others: What Navarre will suffer from annexation to France can be inferred from the fate of Cyprus (named here by its towns Nicosia and Famagosta) ruled by Henry II of Lusignan. Henry's reign from 1285 to 1324 was marked by rivalry for the throne with his, brother Amaury, prince of Tyre, who gained the upper hand before being assassinated by one of his followers in 1310, after which Henry regained the throne.

148. who does not stray from beside the others: Henry runs with the other ruling "beasts" (line 147), a term that in the context of the Last Judgment evokes the beast of Apoc. 13.1 as the model for these rulers (*Purg.* 32.142–47 and notes).

CANTO 20

Quando colui che tutto 'l mondo alluma
del l'emisperio nostro si discende,
che 'l giorno d'ogne parte si consuma,
lo ciel, che sol di lui prima s'accende,
subitamente si rifà parvente
per molte luci in che una risplende,
e questo atto del ciel mi venne a mente
come 'l segno del mondo e de' suoi duci
nel benedetto rostro fu tacente,
però che tutte quelle vive luci,
vie più lucendo, cominciaron canti
da mia memoria labili e caduci.
O dolce amor che di riso t'ammanti,
quanto parevi ardente in que' flailli,
ch' avieno spirto sol di pensier santi!
Poscia che i cari e lucidi lapilli
ond' io vidi ingemmato il sesto lume
puoser silenzio a li angelici squilli,
udir mi parve un mormorar di fiume
che scende chiaro giù di pietra in pietra,
mostrando l'ubertà del suo cacume.
E come suono al collo de la cetra
prende sua forma, e sì com' al pertugio
de la sampogna vento che penètra:
così, rimosso d'aspettar indugio,
quel mormorar de l'aguglia salissi
su per lo collo, come fosse bugio.
Fecesi voce quivi, e quindi uscissi
per lo suo becco in forma di parole,
quali aspettava il core, ov' io le scrissi.

CANTO 20

Jupiter, continued: the eye of the Eagle—Trajan and Rhipeus

When he who lights all the world descends
below our hemisphere, and day on every side is
consumed,
the sky, which earlier was lit by him alone,
suddenly becomes visible again with the many
lights in which one light is reflected,
and this act of the sky came to my mind, as the
sign of the world and of its governors stilled its
blessed beak,
for all those living lights, shining much more
brightly, began songs that have lapsed and fallen
from my memory.
O sweet love that mantle yourself with smiling,
how ardent you seemed in those flutes that
breathed only with holy thoughts!
After the precious, bright stones with which I
saw the sixth star begemmed had imposed
silence on their angelic tones,
I seemed to hear the murmur of a river
descending clear from stone to stone, showing
the fecundity of its summit.
And as the sound takes its form at the neck of
the lute, and the wind that penetrates the sampogna
at the finger-hole,
so, casting off delay, that murmuring in the
eagle rose up through the neck, as if it were
hollow.
It became a voice there, and issued from its
beak in the form of words such as my heart
hoped for, where I wrote them down.

"La parte in me che vede e pate il sole
ne l'aguglie mortali," incominciommi,
"or fisamente riguardar si vole,
perché d'i fuochi ond' io figura fommi
quelli onde l'occhio in testa mi scintilla,
e' di tutti lor gradi son li sommi.
Colui che luce in mezzo per pupilla
fu il cantor de lo Spirito Santo
che l'arca traslatò di villa in villa:
ora conosce il merto del suo canto—
in quanto effetto fu del suo consiglio—
per lo remunerar, ch' è altrettanto.
Dei cinque che mi fan cerchio per ciglio,
colui che più al becco mi s'accosta
la vedovella consolò del figlio:
ora conosce quanto cara costa
non seguir Cristo, per l'esperïenza
di questa dolce vita e de l'opposta.
E quel che segue ne la circunferenza
di che ragiono, per l'arco superno,
morte indugiò per vera penitenza:
ora conosce che 'l giudicio etterno
non si trasmuta quando degno preco
fa crastino là giù de l'odierno.
L'altro che segue, con le leggi e meco,
sotto buona intenzion che fé mal frutto,
per cedere al pastor si fece greco:
ora conosce come il mal dedutto
dal suo bene operar non li è nocivo,
avvegna che sia 'l mondo indi distrutto.
E quel che vedi ne l'arco declivo
Guiglielmo fu, cui quella terra plora
che piagne Carlo e Federigo vivo:
ora conosce come s'innamora
lo Ciel del giusto rege e al sembiante
del suo fulgore il fa vedere ancora.
Chi crederebbe giù nel mondo errante
che Rifëo Troiano in questo tondo
fosse la quinta de le luci sante?

"The part in me that in mortal eagles sees and
endures the sun," it began to me, "now must be
gazed on fixedly,
because, of the fires from which I form my
shape, those by whom the eye sparkles in my
head, they of all the others are the highest in degree.
He who flashes in the center, as the pupil, was
the singer of the Holy Spirit who transferred the
ark from city to city:
now he knows the merit of his singing—in so
far as it was the effect of his counsel—by its
reward, which is equal to it.
Of the five who make a circle for my eyelids, he
who is closest to my beak consoled the poor
widow for her son:
now he knows how dearly it costs not to follow
Christ, by experience of this sweet life and of its
opposite.
And he who follows, on the upper arch of the
circumference of which I speak, delayed death
through true penitence:
now he knows that eternal judgment is not
transmuted when worthy prayer assigns to
tomorrow what down there belongs to today.
The next who follows, with good intention that
bore evil fruit, made himself Greek, along with the
laws and me, in order to give precedence to the shepherd:
now he knows how the evil resulting from his
good act does not harm him, though the world
be destroyed thereby.
And the one you see in the lower arch was
William, mourned by the land that weeps for
Charles and Frederick being still alive:
now he knows how Heaven falls in love with a
just king, and by the brightness of his flashing
shows it still.
Who would believe, down in the erring world,
that Rhipeus the Trojan would be the fifth of the
holy lights in this round?

Ora conosce assai di quel che 'l mondo
veder non può de la divina grazia,
ben che sua vista non discerna il fondo."
Quale allodetta che 'n aere si spazia
prima cantando, e poi tace, contenta
de l'ultima dolcezza che la sazia:
tal mi sembiò l'imago de la 'mprenta
de l'etterno piacere, al cui disio
ciascuna cosa qual ell' è diventa.
E avvegna ch'io fossi al dubbiar mio
lì quasi vetro a lo color ch'el veste,
tempo aspettar tacendo non patio,
ma de la bocca: "Che cose son queste?"
mi pinse con la forza del suo peso,
per ch'io di coruscar vidi gran feste.
Poi appresso, con l'occhio più acceso
lo benedetto segno mi rispuose
per non tenermi in ammirar sospeso:
"Io veggio che tu credi queste cose
perch' io le dico, ma non vedi come,
sì che, se son credute, sono ascose.
Fai come quei che la cosa per nome
apprende ben, ma la sua quiditate
veder non può se altri non la prome.
Regnum celorum vïolenza pate
da caldo amore e da viva speranza
che vince la divina volontate:
non a guisa che l'omo a l'om sobranza,
ma vince lei perché vuole esser vinta,
e, vinta, vince con sua beninanza.
La prima vita del ciglio e la quinta
ti fa maravigliar perché ne vedi
la regïon de li angeli dipinta.
D'i corpi suoi non uscir, come credi,
gentili, ma cristiani in ferma fede,
quel d'i passuri e quel d'i passi piedi.
Ché l'una de lo 'nferno, u' non si riede
già mai a buon voler, tornò a l'ossa,
e ciò di viva spene fu mercede,

Now he knows much of what the world cannot
see of God's grace, although his sight does not
discern its ground."
Like a lark that first soars in the air singing,
and then falls silent, contented with the final
sweetness, which satisfies it:
so the image seemed contented with the
imprint of the eternal Pleasure, by whose desire
each thing becomes what it is.
And although, up there, I was to my doubt like
glass to the color beneath, it brooked no waiting
in silence,
but from my mouth: "What things are these?" it
impelled with all its force, whereat I saw great
rejoicings flash forth.
Then, with its eye more kindled, the blessed
sign answered, so as not to keep me suspended
in amazement:
"I see that you believe these things because I
say them, but do not know how, so that, though
they are believed, they are hidden.
You do as one who learns the name of a thing,
but cannot see its quiddity if another does not
set it forth.
Regnum celorum suffers the violence of
burning love and lively hope that overcome God's will:
not as one man defeats another, but they
conquer it because it wishes to be conquered
and, conquered, conquers with its good will.
The first life of my eyelid and the fifth cause
you to marvel that you see the region of the
angels adorned with them.
They did not come forth from their bodies
pagans, as you think, but Christians in firm faith,
one in the feet that were to suffer, the other when they
had already suffered.
For one of them returned to his bones from
Hell, where none can will the good again, and
that was the reward of lively hope,

di viva spene che mise la possa
ne' prieghi fatti a Dio per suscitarla
sì che potesse sua voglia esser mossa.
L'anima glorïosa onde si parla,
tornata ne la carne, in che fu poco,
credette in lui che potëa aiutarla,
e credendo s'accese in tanto foco
di vero amor ch' a la morte seconda
fu degna di venire a questo gioco.
L'altra, per grazia che da sì profonda
fontana stilla che mai creatura
non pinse l'occhio infino a la prima onda,
tutto suo amor là giù pose a drittura,
per che, di grazia in grazia, Dio li aperse
l'occhio a la nostra redenzion futura,
ond' ei credette in quella, e non sofferse
da indi il puzzo più del paganesmo,
e riprendiene le genti perverse.
Quelle tre donne li fur per battesmo
che tu vedesti da la destra rota,
dinanzi al battezzar più d'un millesmo.
O predestinazion, quanto remota
è la radice tua da quelli aspetti
che la prima cagion non veggion *tota*!
E voi, mortali, tenetevi stretti
a giudicar, ché noi, che Dio vedemo,
non conosciamo ancor tutti li eletti,
ed ènne dolce così fatto scemo,
perché il ben nostro in questo ben s'affina:
che quel che vuol Iddio e noi volemo."
Così da quella imagine divina,
per farmi chiara la mia corta vista,
data me fu soave medicina.
E come a buon cantor buon citarista
fa seguitar lo guizzo de la corda,
in che più di piacer lo canto acquista:
sì, mentre ch'e' parlò, sì mi ricorda
ch' io vidi le due luci benedette,
pur come batter d'occhio si concorda,
con le parole mover le fiammette.

of lively hope that gave power to the prayers made to God to bring him back to life so that his will could be moved.

The glorious soul of which we speak, returning briefly to its flesh, believed in him who could save it,

and, believing caught fire with such a flame of true love, that from the second death it was worthy to come to this joy.

The other, because of grace that flows from so deep a fountain that never creature's eye pierced to its first welling,

devoted all his love down there to righteousness, wherefore, from grace to grace, God opened his eyes to our future redemption,

and he believed in it, and suffered no longer the stench of paganism, but reproached those perverted peoples for it.

Those three ladies were his baptism whom you saw by the right wheel, more than a thousand years before baptizing began.

O predestination, how removed is your root from the sight of those who do not see the first Cause *tota*!

And you mortals, hold back from judging, for we, who see God, do not yet know all the elect,

and such lack delights us, because our good is refined in this good: that what God wishes, we wish, too."

Thus by that divine image, to clear my short sight, sweet medicine was dispensed to me.

And as a good lute-player makes the vibration of the strings follow a good singer, so that the song becomes more pleasing:

thus, while it spoke, I remember that I watched the two blessed lights, as the blinking of two eyes agrees,

moving their flames with the words.

NOTES

1–30. When he who lights . . . I wrote them down: The eagle falls silent (line 9) while the blessed who compose it sing (11–12); they fall silent in turn (line 18) as the eagle speaks (19–21), words that the pilgrim records in his heart (28–30). Note the ineffable music (line 12) contrasted with words retained (line 30; cf. 1.4–6, 7–9 and notes).

1–15. When he who lights . . . with holy thoughts: A synesthetic simile, as at 19.19–21 (see note): the silencing of the eagle's voice, replaced by the chorus of voices, is like the shift at sunset from the single light of the sun to the many lights of the stars (cf. 23.28–30). The sunset simile echoes 14.70–72, also a transition.

1–9. When he who lights . . . its blessed beak: Like 19.10–12, a figure of the one and the many. *Sol* is a traditional pun for the sun, the sole lord of the cosmos, though its light is distributed to lesser lights; the political implication is echoed by the eagle as the sign of the world's *duci* [leaders]. See *Purg.* 13.21; also *Inf.* 10.102.

13–18. O sweet love . . . their angelic tones: The lights are first compared to flutes, after which their tones are compared to the bright gems composing the eagle; this sequence is inverted by the order of emphasis of lines 1–15 (lights) and 16–30 (tones).

13. O sweet love that mantle yourself with smiling: See Ps. 103.2: "Clothed with light as if a garment" [*amictus lumine sicut vestimento*]; see 8.52–54 and note.

16–30. After the precious . . . I wrote them down: When the eagle speaks again, its voice is compared first to the sound of a river, then to the sounds produced by the *sampogna* (a type of bagpipe); these are the words the poet records.

16–18. After the precious . . . their angelic tones: Acoustic and optical effects interact: the "bells" of the eagle, its singing voices, are silenced by the gems, its "lights," which sang in the first place (line 10). The rhyming of "flutes" [*flailli*], "little gems" [*lapilli*], and "bells" [*squilli*] is onomatopoetic; see Additional Note 8.

19–30. I seemed to hear . . . I wrote them down: Spirit or breath becomes voice, then writing (see *Purg.* 24.52–54 and note). This is also an etiology of Dante's poetry of rectitude (cf. *DVE* 2.2.7–8), in which the poet's voice is the voice of justice (cf. 19.113–14 and note). Compare *DVE* 2.3.9:

> whatever has flowed from the very summit of the heads of illustrious poets to their lips, is found only in canzoni. [*quicquid de cacuminibus illustrium capitum poetantium profluit ad labia, in solis cantionibus invenitur.*]

See *Inf.* 26.85–86, 27.58–59; and *Purg.* 24.37 and note

19–21. I seemed to hear . . . fecundity of its summit: See Ezek. 43.2: "His voice was like the noise of many waters." Compare *Mon.* 3.16.15:

> The authority of the temporal monarch flows down into him without any intermediary from the Fountainhead of universal authority; this Fountainhead, though "one in the citadel of its own simplicity of nature"[*Consol.* 4.pr.6.8] flows into many streams from the abundance of its goodness.

Justice draws speech from the fount of Wisdom, as does the poet (see note to lines 26–30 and Additional Note 2).

22–27. And as the sound . . . as if it were hollow: Two analogies for the eagle's voice, one drawn from the lute, the other from a pipe. In stringed instruments the musical pitch is changed by stopping the strings on the fingerboard (the neck); in a pipe or flute, stopping its holes with the fingers alters the length of the air column, modulating the frequency. Dante echoes his own account of a pipe played to produce human speech in lines 39–40 of *Eclogue* 4 to Giovanni del Virgilio:

> verum, ut arundinea puer is pro voce laborat
> —mira loquar, sed vera tamen—spiravit arundo
> [but as the boy strove to draw voice from the reed
> —I speak of marvels, but truly—the reed breathed forth]

Compare the analysis of voice production at *Inf.* 27.7–15, 13–18 and notes.

31–148. The part in me . . . flames with the words: In the rest of the canto, in illustration of the principle stated at 19.103–5, the eagle names the six souls that make up its eye; in response to the pilgrim's surprise regarding two of

them, it clarifies the reasons for their salvation, consistent with the same principle.

31–78. The part in me . . . becomes what it is: The account of the blessed in the eye (lines 37–72), like that of unjust kings at 19.115–48, is twelve terzinas long. Each of the six pairs of terzinas states the soul's passage from former trials to present blessedness, marked by repetition of "now it knows" [*ora conosce*]. There is an implied correlation with the Roman numeral for this sixth sphere (VI; see note to line 99). The series is similar in its artifice to the skywriting of 18.91–93 and the acrostic of 19.115–41; see also Additional Note 2.

31–36. The part in me . . . highest in degree: Eagles were supposed able to gaze into the sun (see 1.46–48 and note); in this case, the eagle's eye, organ of its supreme faculty, gazes on deep mysteries of justice, which the unaided human intellect cannot see. Note the relation to lines 1–15.

37–42. He who flashes . . . equal to it: At the center of the eye is David, "high above the kings of the earth" (Ps. 88.28), renowned for justice (2 Kings 8.15: "David did judgment and justice to all his people"). By bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (line 39; see 2 Kings 6.1–12, and *Purg.* 10.55–69 and note), David established the city as the center of worship; he was traditionally thought to be the author of the Psalms, the basis of Jewish and Christian liturgy (Ecclus. 47.7–11). David's position reflects his importance as the ancestor of the Virgin Mary and of Christ (Matt. 1.1-16); for Dante David's birth also occurred about the time Rome was founded (*Conv.* 4.5.6), so that the king was associated with the providential role of the Roman Empire. His central place as the pupil of the eagle also suggests that he sets the standard of merit and just reward (line 42; see *Par.* 6.118–20) and sees deeper into God's justice than other souls.

In lieu of his name he is identified as "singer" [*cantor*], as at 25.72 ("singer of the Holy Spirit"), a designation otherwise reserved in the poem for Virgil (*Purg.* 22.57) and Cacciaguida (*Par.* 18.51; see also 32.12 and note). For Augustine and Christian tradition, the Psalms were the words of Christ himself speaking through David; thus they speak to both the past and the future. That the psalms are many poems that express one voice may also be linked to the collective voice of the eagle (see 19.11–12 and note and lines below).

37. in the center, as the pupil: Because most esteemed by God; see Ps. 16.8, "Keep me, as the apple [*pupilla*] of thy eye," linked to 6.7, which also refers to Ps. 16.8; and compare 2.143–45 and note, and 3.15.

41. in so far as it was the effect of his counsel: The qualification distinguishes David's inspiration by Christ (see note to lines 37–42) from his authorial contribution to the Psalms (see 2 Peter 1.20–21, 2 Tim. 3.16), from which he derives merit. The degree of individual authorship attributable to biblical writers was intensely debated in Dante's day (see *Mon.* 3.4.11, Minnis et al 1988).

44, 50, 61. he who is closest to my beak . . . on the upper arch . . . in the lower arch: "Circle" (line 43) and *tondo* [round] (line 68) imply that the five souls named by David form the periphery of the eagle's circular eye, and thus are equidistant from David at the center, and not visibly ranked.

43–48. Of the five . . . and of its opposite: Also identifiable in light of Dante's own account is Trajan (see *Purg.* 10.73–93 and notes); see note to 106–17.

49–54. And he who follows . . . belongs to today: Also unnamed (but not previously mentioned by Dante) is Hezekiah, the most just king of Judah (4 Kings 18.5), granted an additional fifteen years of life by God after his imminent death had been prophesied by Isaiah (4 Kings 20.1–11); the biblical passage makes no mention of the king's penitence, only of his prayers. On the relevant question of the efficacy of prayer and its conformity with predestination, see *Purg.* 6.28–48 and notes, and *ST* 2a 2ae q. 83 a. 2.

The early commentators noted that part of Hezekiah's lament when he feared for his life, "In the midst of my days I shall go to the gates of Hell" (Is. 38.10), is echoed in the first line of *Inferno*, "In the middle of the journey of our life."

55–60. The next who follows . . . may be destroyed thereby: Also indicated by periphrasis is the fourth-century emperor Constantine. Although his "donation" of the temporal power of the Western Roman Empire to Pope Sylvester (the "shepherd") was an eighth-century forgery, Dante accepted the document as authentic, but argued that the emperor's cession had been illegitimate (*Mon.* 3.10). The *pia intentio* of Constantine excuses him from blame. See also 6.1–3, *Inf.* 19.115–17 and notes, and *Mon.* 2.11.8; see also Additional Note 2.

55–57. made himself Greek along with the laws and me: The emperor, the empire, and the laws are closely identified (see note to 19.1–21).

Constantine made the empire Greek when he moved its capital from Rome to the site of ancient Byzantium, later known as Constantinople, on the Bosporus in Asia Minor. "Greek" is disparaging, given Dante's feelings about Troy and Rome (adversaries of the Argives—that is, the Greeks), and

because of the longstanding schism between the Roman and Greek churches. See 6.1–3 and note; *Inf.* 26.73–75 and note; 30.98.

60. world may be destroyed thereby: No hyperbole for Dante, for whom a monarchy or empire was necessary for the well-being of the world (and ideally coextensive with it; see *Mon.* 1.11.20, 12.13, 13.8, etc.); for the strong language about the Donation, cf. *Purg.* 32.124–29 and note. That Constantine tears the garment of the empire echoes the rending of the seamless tunic of Christ (John 19.23; see *Mon.* 1.16.3), and contrasts with David, who unified his kingdom (see *Purg.* 10.55–69 and note). See also *Inf.* 19.115–17, 27.94 and notes.

61–66. And the one you see . . . flashing shows it still: Next in the eye is William II Hauteville of Sicily; the sole near-contemporary of Dante's to be placed there; as a Christian king he is close to Constantine, and close to Rhipeus in being explicitly named.

The son of William I, "the Bad", William II, "the Good," was king of Sicily from 1166 to 1189; for the dynastic struggles that followed his death, see 3.109–30 and note. Lines 64–65 reflect, even as they modify, the motto displayed by the heaven of Jupiter (18.91–93).

63. That weeps for Charles and Frederick being still alive: Charles II of Anjou and Frederick II of Aragon, whose misdeeds are recorded at 19.127–32; their presence links the two lists (see *Purg.* 3.112–16, 7.112–17 and note).

67–72. Who would believe . . . does not discern its ground: The fifth soul around the pupil, and the second to be named, is Rhipeus, killed when Troy was sacked by the Greeks. See *Aen.* 2.426–28, with Aeneas narrating:

> Rhipeus also fell, who was among the Teucrians most just [*iustissimus*] and most observant [*servantissimus*] of fair dealing.
> To the gods it appeared otherwise [*dis aliter visum*].

Dante's inclusion of Rhipeus depends also on the allusion to him at *Consol.* 4.pr.6.32–34 (Carsaniga 1984, Scott 1989), where Cato (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 1) is also mentioned. Lady Philosophy speaks:

> To take up a few cases of divine profundity that human reason can grasp in the case of someone you think to be most just and most observant of the right [*iustissimum et aequi servantissimum putas*] to omniscient Providence it appears otherwise [*diversum videtur*]. And a member of our household suggests that the conqueror's cause pleased the gods, that

> of the conquered, Cato [*et victricem quidem causam dis, victam vero Catoni placuisse*]. Therefore whatever you see happen here contrary to your expectation is indeed right order in fact, though in your opinion it is topsy-turvy confusion.

67. Who would believe down in the erring world: A similar sense of scandalous disclosure attends the words of Cunizza. See 9.32–36 and note, with reference to *Consol.* 4.pr.6.31: "From this arises that remarkable wonder of the ordering of fate, when by him who knows, such things are done as the ignorant are amazed at."

The Church held, but did not emphasize, that God wished the salvation of all men (Rom. 11.32, 1 Tim. 2.4). Admission to the community of the faithful was possible only through baptism (see *Inf.* 4.35–36, 39 and notes), but theologians conceded that a baptism of blood (sharing in Christ's Passion) or a baptism of "desire" could open Heaven (*ST* 3a q. 66 a. 11, 3a q. 68 a. 2). Grace could also both reveal the truth of faith to those living before Christ (like the Sibyls and Job) and grant to pagans, whether living before or after the Incarnation, implicit faith (possibly the case of Dante's Cato), for which no visible sacrament was required. See *ST* 2a 2ae q. 2 a. 7: "If however some were saved, to whom no revelation was made, they were not saved without faith in the Mediator; because even if they did not have explicit faith, they had implicit faith in divine Providence."

70–72. Now he knows much . . . his sight does not discern its ground: Rhipeus's will is now conformed to God's decree, though he does not fully understand it (see notes to lines 118–29, 133–35).

73–78. Like a lark . . . becomes what it is: At the center of the canto, the simile of the lark concludes the anaphoric series (*ora conosce*) and expresses the eagle's satisfaction at rendering the mysterious pleasure—meaning the will—of God (lines 76–77). Dante might have known the famous simile at the beginning of a poem by the troubadour Bernart de Ventadorn, or an imitation of it by the Tuscan poet Bondie Dietaiuti. The Provençal original is as follows:

> Can vei la lauzeta mover
> de joi ses alas contra' l rai
> que s'oblid e.s lassa chazer
> per la doussor ch' al cor li vai . . .
> [When I see the lark move
> its wings in joy toward the sun

so that it forgets itself, letting itself fall
because of the sweetness that goes to its heart]

Dante omits the lark's characteristic fall, replaced here by bird ceasing to sing because it is satisfied (the troubadour poem does not mention its song).

76–77. so the image . . . imprint of the eternal pleasure: God's intention (his will, his desire, his pleasure) imprints itself upon the angelic intelligences of the spheres, his instruments, which bring that intention to pass with their circling around the earth (see 9.103–8 and note); similarly, the eagle, which symbolizes the planet's function of imparting to rulers the love of justice, transmits the joy of the creator's providential intention, reflected through it in the appearance of lark-like joy. The complex period prepares disclosure of the eagle's deepest mystery.

78. by whose desire each thing becomes what it is: God's providential plan for each creature brings it to its fullest realization; this is the language of Aristotelian teleology, which describes how substances have an innate tendency (entelechy) that drives them to fulfill their intrinsic essence over time.

79–148. And although up there . . . flames with the words: The eagle explains to the baffled pilgrim how the salvation of Trajan and Rhipeus conforms to the principles outlined in the previous canto.

79–84. And although up there . . . rejoicings flash forth: "Color beneath" refers to the lead or tin backing of the mirror, or to a tint interposed between the glass and the backing; see *Conv.* 3.9.10. The pilgrim's doubt is transparent in his expression, but his voicing of that doubt is hastier still, and bursts out of him, delighting the eagle, which is forthcoming with clarification.

82. but from my mouth What things are these: The pilgrim's surprise echoes that recorded in Acts 2.12, at Pentecost, when the Apostles speak to foreigners in Jerusalem in their own languages; the foreigners react with "What meaneth this?" [*quidnam vult hoc esse?*].

88–93. I see that you believe . . . does not set it forth: The pilgrim thus far merely assents to the meaning of the eagle's declaration; he still must have the essence of the eagle's revelation drawn out of its depths for him. "Quiddity," a scholastic noun meaning "whatness," answers the question *quid est?* [what is it?]

94–99. *Regnum celorum* [the kingdom of Heaven] . . . conquers with its good will: Pagans can be saved because God's strict decree can be overcome by love and hope, a defeat that God himself wills; the paradoxes suggest this is a restatement of the Atonement, the act of divine love that cancels Adam's original sin and makes salvation possible (see 6.82–90, 7.19–52 and notes). Compare *Mon.* 2.9.2, another echo of the motto inscribed in the sphere of Jupiter:

> To ensure that justice is not abandoned we must have recourse to him who so loved justice that, dying, he met its demands with his own blood; whence the Psalm (10.8), "the Lord is just and loves just things" [*iustitias dilexit*].

94. *Regnum celorum* suffers the violence: Dante adapts the account in Matt. 11.12 of the attacks on John the Baptist and the prophets of Christ, "The kingdom of Heaven has been enduring violent assault [*vim patitur*]."

97. not as one man defeats another: Rome mastered the world through military conquest, precisely "as one man defeats another," but for the sake of justice, not to gratify anger (see *Mon.* 2.3.16 and 2.9.13). The Roman pacification of the world through conquest required force [*violentia*], but was providential in preparing the world for the Incarnation of Christ (see *Conv.* 4.5.8–12; *Mon.* 2.10.1).

99. and conquered conquers with its good will: The repeated related terms (*annominatio*) from Italian *vincere* [to defeat or conquer] (cf. 14.125) emphasize the principle involved, and seem to echo *Consol.* 4.pr.6.33 (see note to lines 67–72). The initial pair of letters *vi* appears nine times in lines 94–100, suggesting the importance of the sixth heaven (*VI*) and the historical role of force (Lat. *vis*, but in the instrumental ablative, "by force" = *vi*): another form of the eagle's production of signs relating to the empire.

The questions regarding divine predestination and historical violence raised by the salvation of Rhipeus can be posed of the providential design of history: Aeneas's labor in founding Rome (see *Inf.* 1.73–74 and note) was imposed by the power of those above [*vi superum*] after the Trojans under King Priam appeared "unworthy to the gods above" [*Priami . . . gentem immeritam visum superis*]. See the passage quoted in 6.1–3, with note.

100–105. The first life . . . had already suffered: The eagle affirms that Trajan and Ripheus died as Christians, the latter believing in Christ to come, the former in Christ already come. Use at lines 114 and 124 of the same word for "believed" [*credette*] underlines that their faith was explicit (see note to line

67). The Latinate participles (*passi*, *passuri*) contrast the two aspects of faith, making a phrase that is symmetrical like salvation history itself (see 19.103–5 and note).

103–4. They did not come forth from their bodies pagans, as you think: See notes to lines 67–72, 109–11, and 133–35.

106–17. For one of them . . . to come to this joy: According to legends about Gregory the Great, the pope, moved by the example of Trajan's justice in a work of art (perhaps Trajan's column in Rome), prayed for the emperor's release from Limbo, at which Trajan's soul returned to his bones, allowing him to assent to belief in Christ and be saved. Aquinas suggests that God had foreseen, but delayed, Trajan's salvation (*ST* Suppl. q. 71 a. 5).

106–7. For one of them returned to his bones from Hell: Carroll cites 1 Peter 1.3: "[Christ] according to his great mercy hath regenerated us unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And see *ST* Suppl. q. 71. a. 5: "[Trajan] was by the prayers of the blessed Gregory recalled to life, and in this way grace followed." See also *ST* 1a 2ae q. 114 a. 6.

109–11. of lively hope . . . will could be moved: "lively hope" [*viva spene*] echoes lines 85 and 108 (See 25.31, 53, 87 and notes). Hope is "certain expectation of future grace" (see 25.67–68 and note); along with faith, it sustained the just in Limbo. Gregory's hope for Trajan's salvation defied the expectation (and indeed the fact) that he was damned; it was something that "appeared otherwise."

109–16. of lively hope . . . of true love: Abetted by Gregory's hope, Trajan's endowment with both belief and charity parallels the account in *Mon.* 3.3.10 of how souls come to Christ (the same pattern applies to Rhipeus; see lines 127–29 and note): "those who . . . believed in Christ the Son of God (whether Christ to come [*venturum*] or Christ present or Christ already crucified [*iam passum*]), and who in believing hoped, and hoping burned with love, and burning with love became co-heirs with him" (see Rom. 8.17); cf. lines 100–105 and 19.103–5 and note; see also Prov. 16.5, Acts 10.34–35.

116. of true love, that from the second death: A second bodily death is meant here; the expression is normally used for the death of the soul, damnation (cf. *Inf.* 1.117 and note).

118–41. The other because of grace . . . was dispensed to me: Six references to sight in eight terzinas: that of the creature (line 119); of Rhipeus (line 123);

of mortals (line 130); of the blessed (line 134); the pilgrim's previous sight of the virtues (line 128), and finally, the pilgrim's "short sight" now "cleared" (139–40). See note to line 123.

118–26. The other because of grace . . . those perverted peoples for it: Rhipeus's salvation, based for Dante on Virgil's superlatives and on Boethius's allusions to divine decrees (see note to lines 67–72), results from a love of justice rewarded by the act of grace. The liturgy of the common of martyrs praises them for having loved justice [*dilexisti iustitiam*].

118–20. The other because of grace . . . to its first welling: See 19.62 and note; and compare 30.61–69, 88 and notes.

118. Flows from so deep a fountain: For the fountain of God's judgment, cf. 4.116, 24.9, 31.93, and see *Consol.* 4.pr.6.32, quoted in the note to lines 67–72 above.

121–26. devoted all his love . . . those perverse peoples for it: Line 121 means Rhipeus heeded the first part of the directive radiating from this sphere (*diligite iustitiam*), his reproof of pagans (line 126) fulfilled the second part (*qui iudicatis terram*; see 18.113–15). Because Rhipeus fell for Troy, origin of the sacred seed of the Romans, his death was like that of other Roman martyrs of empire (see *Mon.* 2.5.8–17) and exemplifies the virtue of dying for one's country (*Mon.* 2.7.2–3; and cf. 15.145–48). Dante's canzone "Tre donne intorno al cor mi son venuto," written about 1305, testifies to the poet's own love of justice; see line 80: "To fall with the good still merits praise" (see Martinez 2000 and note to lines 127–29).

123. God opened his eyes to our future redemption: Faith is like the acuity of the eagle's eye, allowing perception of a hidden truth (see lines 119–20, 130–33); in the Gospels, Christ opens the eyes of the blind (Matt. 8.3, John 9.6–7; see *Inf.* 33.148–50 and note).

127–29. Those three ladies . . . before baptizing began: The three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love, seen before the chariot of the Church at *Purg.* 29.121–29, and as the three stars that shine at night in Purgatory (*Purg.* 8.89–93 and notes). Their presence means Rhipeus was granted the grace of faith in Christ well before the Christian era (cf. *ST* 2a 2ae q. 2 a. 7). Faith was the ground for hope, and excited love (see lines 109–15 and note).

Though Boethius only alludes to Rhipeus, his prominence in Dante's poem probably grows out of the central circumstance of Boethius's

book—the unjust imprisonment (ending in death) of the author himself. Dante, we know, identified profoundly with Boethius (see *Inf.* 13.97–100 and note; *Conv.* 1.2.13, 2.12.2), whose experience informs Cacciaguida's destiny, as well as the account he gives of the pilgrim's exile, already decreed (see 15.146–48, 17.52–54 and notes).

130–38. O predestination . . . we wish too: Cf. Rom. 11.33: "O the depths of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!" Cf. *Purg.* 3.32–44 and note.

130–33. O predestination . . . the first cause *tota* [whole]: "When from the high watch-tower of his providence he looks out [*ex alta providentiae specula respexit*], he sees and takes note of what is suited to each, and arranges what he knows to be fitting" (*Consol.* 4.6.30). The image of the watchtower makes vivid the emphasis on sight in lines 119–20, 123, 132, and 135.

133–35. And you mortals . . . know all the elect: Echoing the caution of 13.130–42 (see note and cf. 19.49–50), these lines transform Boethius's "to omniscient Providence it appeared otherwise" (see note to lines 67–72). The correction of easy assumptions about whether a soul is saved or damned is a theme of this canto, and several passages variously adapt this same Boethian formulation sharply distinguishing the view of mortals from that of Providence: see lines 70–72, 99, 103, and 109–11 and notes.

136–38. and such lack delights us . . . we wish too: Although the souls in the eye are all exemplars of just dealing, each is also the beneficiary of a surprising act of grace: the prayers of sinners David and Hezekiah are heard; Trajan and Rhipeus are saved against expectation, one through human prayer, the other by a gift of Providence; Constantine is saved regardless of the destruction he wrought. William II seems to have required no extraordinary divine act, which points perhaps to the fact that all salvation is miraculous, the result of the sacrifice of Christ. Four of the six were first in Limbo before reaching Heaven.

139–41. Thus by that divine image . . . was dispensed to me: That the solution to a theological doubt is medicinal evokes the language of Lady Philosophy at *Consol.* 4.6.29: "Who else preserves the good and casts out the bad but the ruler and physician of men's minds, God? [*rector ac medicator mentium deus*]."

142–48. And as a good lute-player . . . flames with the words: The canto concludes with another synesthetic simile—the *visible* synchrony in the

motion of the two lights, comparable to blinking eyes, is initially compared to the *audible* accord of an accompanying lute and a soloist's voice. The concord of wills in the eagle is itself a heavenly "music." Music is mentioned at the beginning (lines 1–18), middle (73–78), and end of the canto (142–48). See Additional Note 8.

147. as the blinking of two eyes agrees: Trajan and Rhipeus, the most surprising instances of grace, coruscate in unison to punctuate the eagle's speech.

CANTO 21

Già eran li occhi miei rifissi al volto
de la mia donna e l'animo con essi,
e da ogne altro intento s'era tolto.
E quella non ridea, ma: "S' io ridessi,"
mi cominciò, "tu ti faresti quale
fu Semelè quando di cener fessi,
ché la bellezza mia, che per le scale
de l'etterno palazzo più s'accende,
com' hai veduto, quanto più si sale,
se non si temperasse, tanto splende
che 'l tuo mortal podere al suo fulgore
sarebbe fronda che trono scoscende.
Noi sem levati al settimo splendore,
che sotto 'l petto del Leone ardente
raggia mo misto giù del suo valore.
Ficca di retro a li occhi tuoi la mente,
e fa di quelli specchi a la figura
che 'n questo specchio ti sarà parvente."
Qual savesse qual era la pastura
del viso mio ne l'aspetto beato
quand' io mi trasmutai ad altra cura
conoscerebbe quanto m'era a grato
ubidire a la mia celeste scorta,
contrapesando l'un con l'altro lato.
Dentro al cristallo che 'l vocabol porta,
cerchiando il mondo, del suo caro duce
sotto cui giacque ogne malizia morta,
di color d'oro in che raggio traluce
vid' io uno scaleo eretto in suso
tanto che nol seguiva la mia luce.

CANTO 21

Saturn: silence—the Ladder—contemplatives—saint Peter Damiani—predestination inscrutable—denunciation of the popes

Already my eyes were fixed again on the face
of my lady, and my spirit, too, removed from
every other object.
But she was not smiling, and: "If I were to
smile," she began, "you would become like
Semele when she turned to ashes,
for my beauty, which burns brighter, as you
have seen, the higher we ascend the stairway of
the eternal palace,
is so radiant, if not tempered, that your
mortal power to its lightning would be a branch
shattered by a thunderbolt.
We have risen to the seventh splendor, which
now, under the breast of the burning Lion,
radiates downward mixed with its power.
Probe with your mind, following your eyes,
and of them make mirrors for the figure that will
appear to you in this mirror."
Whoever knew what food my eyes found in
her blessed face when I turned away to another
concern,
would see how pleasing it was for me to obey
my heavenly guide, balancing one side against
the other.
Within the crystal that bears the name, as it
circles the world, of that dear ruler under whom
every malice lay dead,
I saw a ladder, the color of gold struck by the
sun, erected upward so far that my light could
not follow it.

Vidi anche per li gradi scender giuso
tanti splendor ch' io pensai ch' ogne lume
che par nel ciel quindi fosse diffuso.
E come, per lo natural costume,
le pole insieme al cominciar del giorno
si movono a scaldar le fredde piume,
poi altre vanno via sanza ritorno,
altre rivolgon sé onde son mosse,
e altre roteando fan soggiorno:
tal modo parve me che quivi fosse
in quello sfavillar che 'nsieme venne,
sì come in certo grado si percosse.
E quel che presso più ci si ritenne
si fé sì chiaro ch' io dicea, pensando:
"Io veggio ben l'amor che tu m'accenne,
ma quella ond' io aspetto il *come* e 'l *quando*
del dire e del tacer si sta, ond' io,
contra 'l disio, fo ben ch' io non dimando."
Per ch' ella, che vedëa il tacer mio
nel veder di colui che tutto vede,
mi disse: "Solve il tuo caldo disio."
E io incominciai: "La mia mercede
non mi fa degno de la tua risposta,
ma per colei che 'l chieder mi concede,
vita beata che ti stai nascosta
dentro a la tua letizia, fammi nota
la cagion che sì presso mi t'hai posta,
e dì perché si tace in questa rota
la dolce sinfonia di Paradiso
che giù per l'altre suona sì divota."
"Tu hai l'udir mortal sì come il viso,"
rispuose a me, "onde qui non si canta
per quel che Beatrice non ha riso.
Giù per li gradi de la scala santa
discesi tanto sol per farti festa
col dire e con la luce che mi ammanta,
né più amor mi fece esser più presta,
ché più e tanto amor quinci sù ferve,
sì come il fiammeggiar ti manifesta.

And I saw coming down by its degrees so many splendors that I thought every light that shows in the heavens must be poured out from there.

As in their natural wont the magpies, when day begins, take wing together to warm their chilled feathers,

then some go away without returning, others return whence they moved, still others stay to wheel above the spot:

such seemed to be the manner there, in the flashings that came down together, as soon as they touched this or that degree.

And the one that stopped closest to us became so bright that I said, in thought: "I see clearly the love you signal to me,

but she from whom I await my *how* and *when* for speaking and being silent, is waiting, and I, despite my desire, do well not to ask."

Therefore she, who saw my silence in the sight of him who sees all things, told me: "Fulfill your warm desire."

And I began: "My merit does not make me worthy of your reply, but for her sake who permits my asking,

O blessed life hidden within your gladness, make known to me the cause why you have come so near,

and say why in this wheel the sweet symphony of Paradise is silent, which down through the others sounds so devoutly."

"Your hearing is mortal, like your sight," it replied to me, "therefore here we are not singing, for the reason Beatrice has not smiled.

Down along the degrees of the holy stairway I have come so far solely to welcome you with speech and with the light that mantles me,

nor did greater love make me hasten more, for more and equal love burns there above me, as the bright flames make manifest to you.

Ma l'alta carità, che ci fa serve
pronte al Consiglio che 'l mondo governa,
sorteggia qui sì come tu osserve."
"Io veggio ben," diss' io, "sacra lucerna,
come libero amore in questa corte
basta a seguir la Provedenza etterna,
ma questo è quel ch' a cerner mi par forte:
perché predestinata fosti sola
a questo officio tra le tue consorte?"
Né venni prima a l'ultima parola
che del suo mezzo fece il lume centro,
girando sé come veloce mola;
poi rispuose l'amor che v'era dentro:
"Luce divina sopra me s'appunta,
penetrando per questa in ch' io m'inventro,
la cui virtù, col mio veder congiunta,
mi leva sopra me tanto ch' i' veggio
la somma Essenza de la quale è munta.
Quinci vien l'allegrezza ond' io fiammeggio,
perch' a la vista mia, quant' ella è chiara,
la chiarità de la fiamma pareggio.
Ma quell'alma nel Ciel che più si schiara,
quel serafin che 'n Dio più ha l'occhio fisso,
a la dimanda tua non satisfara,
però che sì s'innoltra ne l'abisso
de l'etterno statuto quel che chiedi
che da ogne creata vista è scissa.
E al mondo mortal quando tu riedi,
questo rapporta, sì che non presumma
a tanto segno più mover li piedi.
La mente che qui luce in terra fumma,
onde riguarda come può là giùe
quel che non pote perché 'l Ciel l'assumma."
Sì mi prescrisser le parole sue
ch' io lasciai la quistione e mi ritrassi
a dimandarla umilmente chi fue.
"Tra ' due liti d'Italia surgon sassi,
e non molto distanti a la tua patria,
tanto che ' troni assai suonan più bassi,

But the deep love that makes us ready
handmaids of the Counsel that governs the world,
decrees lots here as you observe."
"I see clearly," said I, "holy lantern, how
untrammeled love suffices in this court to make
you follow eternal Providence,
but this is what I find hard to discern: why you
alone were predestined to this office among
those who share your lot."
Nor had I spoken the last word before the
light made of its midst a center, whirling like a
swift millwheel;
then the love within it replied: "A ray of God's
light focuses on me, penetrating this in which I
enwomb myself,
and its power, joined with my own sight, lifts
me so much above myself that I see the highest
Essence from which it is milked.
Thence comes the gladness with which I am
aflame, for I make the brightness of my flame
equal to the clarity of my sight.
But that soul who is brightest in Heaven, the
seraph that most fixes its eye in God, could not
satisfy your wish,
because what you ask is so in the beyond of
the abyss of God's decree, that it is severed
from every created sight.
And when you return to the mortal world,
carry this back, that it may no longer presume to
move its feet toward so great a mark.
The mind that is bright here is smoky on earth,
consider then whether down there it can do what it
cannot do here though Heaven lift it up."
These words so prescribed a limit that I
abandoned my question and drew back to ask
humbly who he was.
"Between the two shores of Italy rise rocks,
not far distant from your fatherland, so high that
thunder sounds much lower,

e fanno un gibbo che si chiama Catria,
di sotto al quale è consecrato un ermo
che suole esser disposto a sola latria."
Così ricominciommi il terzo sermo,
e poi continüando disse: "Quivi
al servigio di Dio mi fe' sì fermo
che pur con cibi di liquor d'ulivi
lievemente passava caldi e geli,
contento ne' pensieri contemplativi.
Render solea quel chiostro a questi cieli
fertilemente, e ora è fatto vano,
sì che tosto convien che si riveli.
In quel loco fu' io Pietro Damiano,
e Pietro Peccator fu' ne la casa
di nostra Donna in sul lito adriano.
Poco vita mortal m'era rimasa
quando fui chiesto e tratto a quel cappello
che pur di male in peggio si travasa.
Venne Cefàs e venne il gran vasello
de lo Spirito Santo magri e scalzi,
prendendo il cibo da qualunque ostello.
Or voglion quinci e quindi chi ' rincalzi
li moderni pastori e chi li meni,
tanto son gravi, e chi di rietro li alzi.
Cuopron d'i manti loro i palafreni,
sì che due bestie van sott' una pelle.
Oh pazïenza che tanto sostieni!"
A questa voce vid' io più fiammelle
di grado in grado scendere e girarsi,
e ogne giro le facea più belle.
Dintorno a questa vennero e fermarsi,
e fero un grido di sì alto suono
che non potrebbe qui assomigliarsi,
né io lo 'ntesi, sì mi vinse il tuono.

and they make a hump called Catria, beneath
which there is a hermitage once devoted only to
God's worship."
So he began his third speech to me, and
then, continuing, he said: "There I became so
fixed in the service of God
that with but the juice of olives I easily
survived heats and frosts, content in my
contemplative thoughts.
That cloister used to produce fertile harvests
for these heavens, but now it has become
so empty that soon it must be revealed.
In that place I was Peter Damiani, and I was
Peter the Sinner in the house of our Lady on the
Adriatic shore.
Little mortal life remained for me when I was
required and forced to that hat which is still
transferred from bad vessels to worse.
Simon came, and the great Vessel of the
Holy Spirit came, thin and barefoot, taking their
food in any hostel.
Now the modern shepherds need someone on each
side to hold them up and lead them, they are so fat, and
someone to lift them up behind.
They cover their palfreys with their mantles,
so that two beasts go beneath one skin: Oh
Patience that endures so much!"
At this word I saw numerous bright flames come
down from stair to stair and whirl, and every whirling
made them lovelier.
They gathered round this one and stopped,
and then uttered so loud a cry that nothing
could resemble it down here,
nor did I understand it, its thunder so overcame me.

NOTES

1–18. Already my eyes . . . in this mirror: As in 18.54–69, the pilgrim turns to Beatrice, whose changed appearance is the sign of having risen to the next planet (as she announces in lines 13–15), in this case to the last, Saturn, with the largest sphere and the slowest motion of all. Dante had been preoccupied with the place of Saturn in his horoscope since the late 1290s, when the "Rime petrose," his first experiments in microcosmic poetic structures, explored its power, both negative and positive (see Additional Note 12, Durling/Martinez 1990).

4–12. If I were to smile . . . shattered by a thunderbolt: Dante is drawing here on the myth of Semele, a daughter of Cadmus, one of Jupiter's lovers, who is tricked by the jealous Juno into demanding to see him in his actual godlike form, complete with thunderbolts. She is consumed instantly, but Jupiter saves the child in her womb, Bacchus, by carrying him to term in his thigh (*Met.* 3.253–315). The reference to the lightning and thunderbolt in lines 11–12 is part of the same complex of imagery: the pilgrim is not yet strong enough to be able to withstand the full assimilation to divinity of the souls here; Beatrice's very smile would destroy him, as would the singing of the souls (cf. lines 58–63).

13–18. We have risen . . . in this mirror: The formal announcement of their arrival in Saturn, couched in terms of its astrological position; for the astrological lore about Saturn, which is particularly rich, see Klibansky/Panofsky/Saxl 1979.

14–15. which now, under . . . mixed with its power: Dante's phrase "breast of the burning Lion" is a clear reference to α Leonis[1] ("Regulus" [little king]), the brightest star in the impressive constellation Leo, known as the "heart of the Lion" [*cor leonis*]. As the "house of the sun," Leo, and especially Regulus, radiates heat that now mitigates the often dangerous cold radiated by Saturn. Leo was important also in Canto 16: Cacciaguida dates his birth by the number of synodic cycles Mars had completed by passing under Leo (550) since the Annunciation (16.34–39; see notes there and fig. 11, p. 371).

16–18. Probe with your mind . . . in this mirror: As in previous arrivals, Beatrice instructs the pilgrim to look away from her to the sight now presented to him, making his eyes "mirrors" (perceivers; cf. 18.2) of the "figure" that

will appear (cf. "figure" in 18.78 and 86: we know that some wondrous new show will now begin).

19–24. Whoever knew . . . against the other: The pilgrim and thus the poem now formally turn to the contents of Saturn. As any contemporary reader of Dante's would know, contemplatives are prominent among the children of Saturn, and in the Middle Ages the contemplative life was typically pursued in monasteries. The silence and solemnity, and the ideal purity of the crystal (see the note on line 25), already prepare us.

25–42. Within the crystal . . . this or that degree: The initial view of the planet Saturn, whose ladder is based on the famous episode of Jacob's dream, which takes place when he is on his way to seek a wife from among the daughters of Laban; he has just impersonated his brother Esau and received his father's blessing as firstborn (the right that Esau had sold to him):

> [Jacob] went on to Haran. And when he was come to a certain place, and would rest in it after sunset, he took of the stones that lay there, and putting one under his head, slept in the same place. And he saw in his sleep a ladder standing upon the earth, and the top thereof touching heaven: the angels also of God ascending and descending by it; And the Lord leaning upon the ladder, saying to him: I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou sleepest, I will give to thee and to thy seed . . . And when Jacob awaked out of sleep, he said: Indeed the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And trembling he said: How terrible is this place! this is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven (Gen. 28.10–17).

In his Rule, Saint Benedict of Nursia (ca. 480–ca. 547), founder of the great monastery of Monte Cassino and of Western cenobitic monasticism in general (we will meet him in Canto 22), made Jacob's ladder the fundamental metaphor for monastic life; based solidly on earth in its practicality, his ideal of the practice of humility and devotion formed a ladder of twelve steps (including fear of God, humility, silence, and obedience) that led upward to God. This formulation, like the Rule itself, dominated monastic conceptions and life well into the twelfth century, when saint Bernard of Clairvaux became the leading influence in the Cistercian movement that rivaled the Benedictines. His *Steps of Pride and Humility* became enormously influential; it was based on the twelve steps of saint Benedict's metaphor, defining the upward steps of humility with greater emphasis on the goal of mystical experience in this life, and adding shrewd psychological analyses of the corresponding downward steps of pride (see 31.94–102, with notes).

25–27. Within the crystal . . . malice lay dead: Note again the circumlocution relative to the name of the planet (cf. 8.1–12, with notes). Saturn would have been a particularly just and successful king in Italy under whom violence was unknown (a euhemeristic explanation of the myth of the Golden Age and Saturn's stay in Italy; cf. *Purg.* 28.139–47, where they are treated as an inspired dream of Eden).

25. Within the crystal: The planet is compared to a crystal, probably because of the traditional coldness of Saturn, associated with monastic purity: crystals were thought to be ice that had been frozen a long time (on their lore, which fascinated Dante, see Durling/Martinez 1990).

28–33. I saw a ladder . . . poured out from there: The sober account of Genesis 28 does not mention any color for the ladder, nor indicate the number of angels in any way (interestingly, both the Vulgate and the Hebrew text are ambiguous: in both, verse 12 can have either definite or indefinite meaning: "the angels of God" or "angels of God" (the exegetical tradition leaned toward the former). Note that Dante omits the mention of the earth being the base of the ladder (but the systematic monastic references assume the fact, and cf. 22.68–74); also, he quantifies the length of the ladder as "so far that my light could not follow," while Genesis has simply, "touching heaven." Adapting the symbol to his cosmological conceptions (see Heck 1999), Dante is reserving Heaven and God for later (for the ladder as a basic symbol of the entire *Comedy*, see our introduction in *Inferno*, pp. 18–20).

28. the color of gold struck by the sun: Iconographically, gold represents eternity and Heaven (as in the gold backgrounds of icons, manuscript illuminations, and early paintings) and thus represents the origin and status of the ladder. (For gold struck by the sun, cf. 17.123.)

30. my light: A reference to the Platonic theory that the eye emits light (see the note on *Inf.* 4.11–12), vision occurring when it meets external light.

31–42. And I saw coming down . . . this or that degree: The multitude descending the ladder are not or not only angels, as we soon find out, and the idea of re-ascent is at this first stage of description limited to its presence in the simile of the magpies (lines 34–39).

32–33. so many splendors . . . poured out from there: The "splendors" (whether souls, angels, or both) seem to be as many as the stars in the sky (the stars of course lie behind the ancient notion of the heavenly host); but lines 64–72 seem to exclude the presence of angels.

34–39. As in their natural . . . above the spot: This lively simile recalls the bird simile in 18.73–81, which also invokes the changing, multiple patterns of flight, and now the morning theme has become explicit. Magpies are notoriously noisy, a connotation that helps emphasize the silence of the planet.

40–42. such seemed to be . . . this or that degree: The diversity of the movements of the birds (flying away, returning to origin, circling in place) is attributed, without further specification, to the souls/angels. The "flashings that came down together" refers to the entire multitude, but singly they seem assigned (at least for the moment) to "this or that degree," in which they perhaps circle.

43–142. And the one that . . . so overcame me: The rest of the canto is devoted to the encounter with a soul who is not named until line 121, a fact that increases the sense of mystery of the silent planet.

43–51. And the one that . . . your warm desire: The soul who has come down the ladder closest to them shines so brightly with love that the pilgrim wishes to address it but hesitates, waiting for Beatrice's signal.

44–51. I said, in thought . . . your warm desire: The pilgrim knows that the blessed can read his thoughts in God, and addresses this soul silently, explaining his waiting for Beatrice's permission, which is spoken aloud, since he cannot read minds as the blessed can.

52–60. And I began . . . sounds so devoutly: The pilgrim now speaks, asking two questions: why this soul has approached them, and why in this planet there is no devout singing, as in the others.

61–63. Your hearing is mortal . . . has not smiled: The second question is answered first: Beatrice has explained her not smiling in lines 4–12.

64–72. Down along the degrees . . . as you observe: The soul's only reason for approaching them, it says, was its desire to express gladness and welcome to the pilgrim (the pronoun is singular) with speech and love; it does not feel greater love toward him than others above him on the ladder, where the pilgrim can see both equal and greater brightness. It is the love of God and of his Providence ("the Counsel that governs" and "decrees lots" [assigns roles] to individual souls) that makes them gladly obey, as their behavior indicates.

73–78. I see clearly . . . who share your lot: The pilgrim sees well the nature of their love but is puzzled: why was this soul in particular chosen to perform

the task rather than some other among them? The pilgrim himself introduces the term *predestined*, making explicit the implication of the soul's reply (God's Providence chose him *ab aeterno* for the task), and predestination is indeed the theme all these questions have been leading up to. The question is particularly appropriate to Saturn, which, as the last planet, whose heaven encloses all the others and has the largest purview, is the ruler of boundaries, both beginnings and endings, sowings and reapings. The iconography of Saturn shows him holding a sickle.

79–102. Nor had I spoken . . . lift it up: The soul's reply begins with his rapturous whirling, expressing the added joy of testifying to his vision of God. Then his answer has three parts: lines 83–90, on the particular mode of knowledge that led him to approach the pilgrim; lines 91–96, on the inaccessibility to human and angelic minds, of the reasons for God's predestination of individuals; and lines 97–102, a command that the poet speak out, when he has returned to earth, against the presumption that earthly minds can know God's reasons.

83–90. A ray of God's . . . clarity of my sight: The first part of the soul's reply: his knowledge of being chosen for the task comes from special illumination that lifts his intellect so high that it sees into God as the angels do, reading in that "highest Essence" his providential task.

88–90. Thence comes the gladness . . . clarity of my sight: As in 14.37–42, Dante has the soul insist on the primacy of intellect: the "flame" of his rejoicing reflects the clarity of his intellectual vision.

91–96. But that soul . . . every created sight: The second part of the reply. Note the parallel of the phrasing with Beatrice's lines on the appearance of souls in the planets, 4.28–42. The "soul that is brightest in Heaven" is of course the Virgin Mary (cf. 4.30: "not Mary"), and the Seraph that sees mostly deeply into God (cf. 4.28: "the Seraph that most engods itself") is the highest of the highest order of angels: no created mind can understand God's will or predestination.

94–95. because what you ask . . . God's decree: What has to be lengthened out in translation to "is so in the beyond of the abyss" is compressed by Dante in another striking coinage: "s'innoltra ne l'abisso" (*innoltrarsi*, to go or be *oltre* [beyond, from Lat. *ultra*]).

97–102. And when you return . . . lift it up: The third part of the reply. The injunction to speak out (lines 97–99), and the difference between earthly and heavenly understanding.

97–99. And when you return . . . so great a mark: "To move its [the world's] feet" refers to moving intellectually toward an idea or conclusion (on the feet of the soul, cf. *Inf.* 1.30, with note). The injunction against presumptuous judging is parallel to 13.112–42 (cf. the metaphors of walking, 13.112–14 and 118–19; of sailing to sea and fishing for the truth, 13.121–23); the mystery of predestination is even higher and more abstract than predicting who is saved or lost (the subject of Canto 13).

100–102. The mind that is bright . . . lift it up: In comparison with the clarity of mind of the soul in Heaven, its earthly understanding was like smoke; how can it hope to understand on earth what it cannot understand in Heaven when lifted up?

L'assumma is a subjunctive, depending on *perché* [though], of the verb *assumere* [to lift up, as in the Assumption of the Virgin]; the doubled *m* was not uncommon.

103–5. These words . . . who he was: The soul has prescribed a limit, a boundary, to human speculation about predestination (appropriately enough; cf. the note to lines 73–78), and the pilgrim abandons his first question and asks the soul's identity.

106–25. Between the two shores . . . endures so much: The soul begins by identifying his principal dwelling and his ascetic life, lamenting the present decadence; he names himself and briefly alludes to his tenure as cardinal. The rest of his speech is a denunciation of the luxury and corruption of the clergy, contrasting it with the poverty of the apostles.

106–11. Between the two . . . to God's worship: The Camaldulensian Eremo [hermitage] of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, at an elevation of 680 m. on the northeastern slope of Mount Catria, about twenty miles northeast of Gubbio, on the border between the Marche and Umbria (see map on p. 187). Like the hermitage of Camaldoli, it was one of the many foundations of saint Romualdo (see 22.49, with note), a severely ascetic combination of eremitic life (some of the monks lived in individual small buildings) and cenobitic (others lived in common under the Benedictine Rule); both groups obeyed the same prior.

113–26. There I became so fixed . . . bad vessels to worse: A brief account of the soul's career: as an ascetic hermit in Fonte Avellana (in his time a place rich in virtues but now scandalously corrupt), and then a cardinal.

118–20. That cloister used . . . it must be revealed: Dante must be referring to some well-known recent scandal, but no information about it has come down to us. Note the harvest metaphor (implicit in "render . . . fertilemente" [lit., give fertile return]), which will become more frequent from now on.

121–26. In that place . . . bad vessels to worse: Finally the soul names himself: he is the sainted Peter Damiani, a noted ascetic indeed. Born in Ravenna in 1007, he became a monk in 1035, and in 1038 settled definitely in the hermitage of Fonte Avellana, of which he was elected prior in 1043 (he succeeded in reforming the monastery, reducing somewhat the extreme rigor of the order).

122–23. and I was Peter the Sinner . . . Adriatic shore: There has been much controversy over these lines, which have been taken to mean that the saint changed his name. The consensus today is that Dante seems to have conflated him with Pietro degli Onesti, a Benedictine monk who founded a monastery in Ravenna and referred to himself as "Peter the Sinner" (Frugoni 1973). Peter Damiani took the name of his older brother Damiano (the *-i* is a Lat. genitive of possession) to express his gratitude for the financing of his years of study.

124–26. Little mortal life . . . bad vessels to worse: Cardinals wore a distinctive red hat, the badge of their office, also featured on their arms and seals. Peter Damiani was a leader in the important wave of reform of monasteries in this period and in 1057 was made a cardinal (but Dante is mistaken that this took place at the end of his life, for he lived until 1072, the last ten years back at Fonte Avellana). He was a voluminous writer (his writings include a life of saint Romuald), a vivacious and severe satirist of both the monastic and the secular clergy.

125–26. I was required and forced . . . bad vessels to worse: It is true that he was reluctant to accept appointment as a cardinal and pleaded for years to be allowed to return to Fonte Avellana. The pope and cardinals are now the ones who "sell Christ daily" (cf. 17.49–51). There will be further denunciations in Canto 22 and later.

127–35. Simon came . . . endures so much: The contrast between the poverty of the Apostles and the excesses of the corrupt modern clergy. Simon is saint Peter, the "great Vessel" is saint Paul (the "chosen vessel," Acts 5.19; Dante never mentions the fact that saint Paul always earned his own living, as a tent maker).

130–34. Now the modern . . . beneath one skin: Lines 130–32 mock the way the obese modern prelates mount and ride on horseback—held up and kept

from falling by a servant on each side, and lifted from behind into the saddle. Lines 133–34 comment on the luxuriously ample (silk or wool) mantles that cover both rider (and a fat one, too) and palfrey, climaxing with the scornful "two beasts go beneath one skin," the prelate's mantle being no better (indeed, considerably less useful) than the palfrey's skin.

135. Oh Patience that endures so much: An angry expression of the idea that God's patience certainly exceeds human capacity.

136–42. At this word…so overcame me: At Peter Damiani's angry exclamation, a large number of the souls stationed on the upper degrees of the ladder come down, whirling on their way and enhancing their beauty, until they surround him and utter a cry echoing his anger, so loud that the pilgrim cannot understand it.

CANTO 22

Oppresso di stupore, a la mia guida
mi volsi come parvol che ricorre
sempre colà dove più si confida,
e quella, come madre che soccorre
sùbito al figlio palido e anelo
con la sua voce, che 'l suol ben disporre,
mi disse: "Non sai tu che tu se' in Cielo?
e non sai tu che 'l Cielo è tutto santo,
e ciò che si fa vien da buon zelo?
Come t'avrebbe trasmutato il canto,
e io ridendo, mo pensar tu puoi,
poscia che 'l grido t'ha mosso cotanto,
nel qual, se 'nteso avessi i prieghi suoi,
già ti sarebbe nota la vendetta
che tu vedrai anzi che tu muoi.
La spada di qua sù non taglia in fretta
né tardo, ma' ch' al parer di colui
che disïando o temendo l'aspetta.
Ma rivolgiti omai inverso altrui,
ch'assai illustri spiriti vedrai,
se com' io dico l'aspetto redui."
Come a lei piacque li occhi ritornai,
e vidi cento sperule che 'nsieme
più s'abbellivan con mutüi rai.
Io stava come quei che 'n sé repreme
la punta del disio e non s'attenta
di domandar, sì del troppo si teme,
e la maggiore e più luculenta
di quelle margherite innanzi fessi
per far di sé la mia voglia contenta.

CANTO 22

Saturn, continued: saint Benedict of Nursia—corruption of the monastic orders—ascent to the fixed stars—invocation of the stars of Gemini— backward view

Stunned and bewildered, I turned to my guide
like a little child that runs always where he most
has confidence,
and she, like a mother who quickly helps her
pallid, breathless son with the voice that has the
power to calm him,
said to me: "Do you not know you are in
Heaven? do you not know that Heaven is all holy,
and that what is done here comes from good zeal?
How our singing would have transmuted you,
or my smiling, you can think now, since the
shout has moved you so,
in which, if you had understood its prayers,
you would already know the vengeance that you
will see before you die.
The sword of Heaven never cuts in haste nor
late, except as seems to one who awaits it with
either desire or fear.
But turn back now toward the others, for
many illustrious spirits will you see, if, as I say,
you redirect your gaze."
As she pleased, I turned my eyes, and I saw
a hundred little spheres, together making each
other more beautiful with mutual rays.
I was like one who presses down within
himself the point of his desire and does not
venture to ask, he so fears excess,
and the greatest and most radiant of those
pearls came forward, to satisfy my desire by
giving itself.

Poi dentro a lei udi': "Se tu vedessi
com' io la carità che tra noi arde,
li tuoi concetti sarebbero espressi.
Ma perché tu aspettando non tarde
a l'alto fine, io ti farò risposta
pur al pensier, da che sì ti riguarde.
Quel monte a cui Cassino è ne la costa
fu frequentato già in su la cima
da la gente ingannata e mal disposta,
e quel son io che sù vi portai prima
lo nome di colui che 'n terra addusse
la verità che tanto ci soblima;
e tanta grazia sopra me rilusse
ch' io ritrassi le ville circunstanti
da l'empio cólto che 'l mondo sedusse.
Questi altri fuochi tutti contemplanti
uomini fuoro, accesi di quel caldo
che fa nascere i fiori e ' frutti santi.
Qui è Maccario, qui è Romualdo,
qui son li frati miei che dentro ai chiostri
fermar li piedi e tennero il cor saldo."
E io a lui: "L'affetto che dimostri
meco parlando e la buona sembianza
ch' io veggio e noto in tutti li ardor vostri,
così m'ha dilatata mia fidanza
come 'l sol fa la rosa quando aperta
tanto divien quant' ell' ha di possanza.
Però ti priego, e tu, padre, m'accerta
s'io posso prender tanta grazia ch' io
ti veggia con imagine scoverta."
Ond' elli: "Frate, il tuo alto disio
s'adempierà in su l'ultima spera,
ove s'adempion tutti li altri e 'l mio.
Ivi è perfetta, matura e intera
ciascuna disïanza; in quella sola
è ogne parte là ove sempr' era,
perché non è in loco e non s'impola,
e nostra scala infino ad essa varca,
onde così dal viso ti s'invola:

Then within it I heard: "If you saw as I do the
love that burns among us, your concepts would
be expressed.
But so that you may not delay, by waiting,
your high goal, I will answer even the thought
that you keep to yourself.
The mountain that bears Cassino on its side was
once frequented, at the summit, by folk deceived
and ill disposed,
and I am he who first carried there the name
of him who brought to earth the truth that so
exalts us;
and so much grace shone down upon me
that I drew the surrounding towns away from the
wicked cult that had seduced the world.
These other fires were all contemplative men,
on fire with the zeal that gives birth to holy
flowers and fruit.
Here is Macarius, here is Romuald, here are
my brothers who fixed their feet within the
cloisters and kept their hearts firm."
And I to him: "The affection you show in
speaking with me and the good appearance that
I see and note in all your fires
have made my confidence blossom, as the
sun does a rose when it becomes as open on
its stem as it has power to do.
Therefore I beg you, father, to assure me
whether I may receive so much grace as to see
your countenance openly."
And he: "Brother, your high desire will be
fulfilled up above in the last sphere, where all
others are fulfilled, and mine as well.
There every desiring is perfect, ripe, and
whole; there alone is every part where it has
always been,
for it is not in space and turns on no pole, and
our ladder is the bridge from here to there, and
therefore flies so far beyond your sight.

infin là sù la vide il patriarca
Iacobbe porger la superna parte,
quando li apparve d'angeli sì carca.
Ma per salirla mo nessun diparte
da terra i piedi, e la regola mia
rimasa è per danno de le carte.
Le mura che solieno esser badia
fatte son spelonche, e le cocolle
sacca son piene di farina ria.
Ma grave usura tanto non si tolle
contra 'l piacer di Dio, quanto quel frutto
che fa il cor de' monaci sì folle,
ché quantunque la Chiesa guarda, tutto
è de la gente che per Dio dimanda,
non di parenti né d'altro più brutto.
La carne d'i mortali è tanto blanda
che giù non basta buon cominciamento
dal nascer de la quercia al far la ghianda.
Pier cominciò sanz' oro e sanz' argento,
e io con orazione e con digiuno,
e Francesco umilmente il suo convento,
e se guardi 'l principio di ciascuno,
poscia riguardi là dov' è trascorso,
tu vederai del bianco fatto bruno.
Veramente Iordàn vòlto retrorso
più fu, e 'l mar fuggir, quando Dio volse,
mirabile a veder che qui 'l soccorso."
Così mi disse e indi si raccolse
al suo collegio, e 'l collegio si strinse,
poi come turbo in sù tutto s'avvolse.
La dolce donna dietro a lor mi pinse
con un sol cenno su per quella scala,
sì sua virtù la mia natura vinse,
né mai qua giù, dove si monta e cala
naturalmente, fu sì ratto moto
ch' agguagliar si potesse a la mia ala.
S' io torni mai, lettore, a quel divoto
trïunfo per lo quale io piango spesso
le mie peccata e 'l petto mi percuoto:

the patriarch Jacob saw it extend its upper part all the way up there, when it appeared to him so laden with angels.

But now no one lifts his feet from earth to climb it, and my Rule has become a waste of paper.

The walls that used to be abbeys have become caverns, and the monks' cowls are sacks full of evil flour.

But heavy usury has never been exacted so contrary to God's will, as that fruit that makes the monks' hearts so mad,

for whatever the Church has in her keeping belongs to the people that beg in God's name, not to relatives or something uglier.

The flesh of mortals is so weak that a good beginning does not last down there from the birth of the oak to its bearing of acorns.

Peter began without gold and without silver, I with prayer and fasting, and Francis his convent in humility,

and if you look at each one's beginning and then see where it has run awry, you will see white has turned black.

Truly Jordan flowing backward and the sea drawing back at God's will were more marvelous to see than the remedy will be for this."

So he said, and then returned to his colleagues, and that college gathered itself together and like a whirlwind swept upward.

My sweet lady impelled me after them up that ladder with a mere sign, her power so overcame my nature,

nor down here, where we mount and descend naturally, has there ever been so rapid a motion as could equal my wing.

So may I return, reader, to that devout triumph on whose account I ever weep for my sins and beat my breast:

tu non avresti in tanto tratto e messo
nel foco il dito, in quant' io vidi 'l segno
che segue il Tauro e fui dentro da esso.
O glorïose stelle, o lume pregno
di gran virtù, dal quale io riconosco
tutto, qual che si sia, il mio ingegno,
con voi nasceva e s'ascondeva vosco
quelli ch' è padre d'ogne mortal vita,
quand' io senti' di prima l'aere tosco,
e poi, quando mi fu grazia largita
d'entrar ne l'alta rota che vi gira,
la vostra regïon mi fu sortita.
A voi divotamente ora sospira
l'anima mia per acquistar virtute
al passo forte che a sé la tira.
"Tu se' sì presso a l'ultima salute,"
cominciò Bëatrice: "che tu dei
aver le luci tue chiare e acute,
e però, prima che tu più t'inlei,
rimira in giù e vedi quanto mondo
sotto li piedi già esser ti fei,
sì che 'l tuo cor quantunque può giocondo
s'appresenti a la turba trïunfante
che lieta vien per questo etera tondo."
Col viso ritornai per tutte quante
le sette spere, e vidi questo globo
tal ch'io sorrisi del suo vil sembiante,
e quel consiglio per migliore approbo
che l'ha per meno, e chi ad altro pensa
chiamar si puote veramente probo.
Vidi la figlia di Latona incensa
sanza quell' ombra che mi fu cagione
per che già la credetti rara e densa.
L'aspetto del tuo nato, Iperïone,
quivi sostenni, e vidi com' si move
circa e vicino a lui Maia e Dione.
Quindi m'apparve il temperar di Giove
tra 'l padre e 'l figlio, e quindi mi fu chiaro
il varïar che fanno di lor *dove*.

you would not any sooner have withdrawn
your finger from the fire and put it in, than I saw
the sign that follows the Bull and was within it.

O glorious stars, O light pregnant with great
power, from which I acknowledge that all my
talent comes, whatever it may be,

with you was being born and with you was
setting he that is father of every mortal life,
when I first felt the Tuscan air,

and then, when grace was extended to me to
enter the high wheel that turns you, your region
was allotted me.

To you now my soul devoutly sighs, to
acquire power for the difficult pass that draws
me to itself.

"You are so close to the final salvation,"
began Beatrice, "that you must have your eyes
clear and sharp,

and therefore, before you enter it any further,
look back down, and see how much world I
have already placed beneath your feet,

so that your heart may present itself as
joyfully as it can to the glad triumphant throng
approaching through this rounded aether."

With my sight I returned through every one of
the seven spheres, and I saw this globe to be
such that I smiled at its base appearance,

and that counsel I approve as best which
prizes it least, and he who thinks of other things
can be called truly upright.

I saw the daughter of Latona aflame without
the shadow that caused me formerly to think of
her as rare and dense.

The sight of your son, Hyperion, I there
sustained, and I saw how Maia and Dione move
close about him.

From there I saw Jove's tempering between
his father and his son, and from there was clear
to me the varying they do of their *where*.

E tutti e sette mi si dimostraro
quanto son grandi e quanto son veloci,
e come sono in distante riparo.
L'aiuola che ci fa tanto feroci,
volgendom' io con li etterni Gemelli,
tutta m'apparve da' colli a le foci.
Poscia rivolsi li occhi a li occhi belli.

148 And all the seven showed me how large they
are and how swift and how distant in dwelling.
151 The little threshing floor that makes us so
ferocious, as I was turning with the eternal Twins,
appeared to me, all of it from the mountains to
the river mouths.
154 Then I turned my eyes back to her lovely eyes.

NOTES

1–21. Stunned and bewildered . . . redirect your gaze: One notes the skill with which the ending of the previous canto suspends the reader in expectation and creates a sense of new beginning in this introduction to the new canto. Compare the earthquake and "Gloria" that end *Purgatorio* 20 and the suspense at the beginning of Canto 21.

1–6. Stunned and bewildered . . . to calm him: Perhaps the most explicit declaration of the maternal aspect of Beatrice's relation to the pilgrim. In this respect Beatrice is a kind of personification of the Church.

7–18. Do you not know . . . desire or fear: Beatrice calms the pilgrim's fears, reminds him of the nature of Saturn, interprets the shout of 21.130–42, and predicts the punishment of the corrupt prelates condemned there.

7–9. Do you not know . . . from good zeal: The pilgrim should not have been troubled by the shout, since everything in Heaven is good. Strictly speaking, of course, the pilgrim does not reach Heaven (the Empyrean) until Canto 30, but these souls are "really" there and only appear to the pilgrim to be in Saturn.

10–15. How our singing . . . before you die: Reminding him that the muting of song and of her smile in Saturn was an accommodation to the pilgrim's limitations, Beatrice suggests that the shout was less muted (line 12), presumably because the call for justice is in itself less transcendent than her beauty here. She explains that the shout was a prayer for punishment of the corrupt prelates ("the vengeance," in line 14, that will come "before you die": it is not known what, if anything, Dante had in mind here).

16–18. The sword of Heaven . . . desire or fear: God's justice is fulfilled in the manner decreed in eternity; only those who are impatient to see the wicked punished find it slow, and only those who fear it find it swift.

19–21. But turn back now . . . redirect your gaze: One notes the increase in explicit reliance on Beatrice's gaze (cf. 21.16–18, 22.124–32, 27.76, with notes.)

23–30. I saw a hundred . . . by giving itself: These "hundred little spheres" are not said to make any particular "figure," nor are they said to surround the pilgrim and Beatrice; they are imagined *in front of* them, since one of them

comes "forward" to address the pilgrim (cf. 8.16–30, 15.13–42). That we are to imagine the ladder of Canto 21 as still visible is indicated by lines 67–72.

25–27. I was like one . . . so fears excess: Again the pilgrim's modest humility. The "point" of desire is its felt sharpness; *attentarsi* (line 26) derives from Lat. *attempto* (*ad* + *tempto* [to attempt, seduce]): usually taken as meaning "to dare, to risk," it clearly includes the sense of not allowing oneself to be tempted by one's desire. The soul of course reads the pilgrim's wish in God (lines 31–36).

31–96. Then within it . . . remedy will be for this: The speaker is immediately recognizable: the founder of the monastery of Monte Cassino is saint Benedict of Nursia himself (see the note to 21.25–42, Additional Note 5). He began his monastic career at Subiaco, in an eremitic foundation, but eventually moved to the summit of Monte Cassino, where there was an ancient pagan temple; after destroying the altars, he made it the nucleus of his monastery. The fame of his saintly life brought disciples to him, for whom, eventually, he wrote his famous Rule. Dante's claim that he converted the surrounding country folk to Christianity is based on the biography written by Gregory the Great (*Dialogues* Book 2), which contains much fabulous material.

After identifying himself and those surrounding him as faithful contemplative monks, naming only two of them, the saint assures the pilgrim, in answer to his question, that his face will be visible in the Empyrean; then, commenting on Jacob's dream (Gen. 28.10–28), he pronounces a severe condemnation of the state of moasticism in 1300, predicting that the remedy is close at hand.

49–51. Here is Macarius . . . kept their hearts firm: Both eremitic and cenobitic forms of monasticism are credited by Dante's saint Benedict with having contemplation as their primary goal. This is something of an oversimplification, both because "contemplation" was an inclusive term (it included the study of the Bible and other important texts, the study of God as revealed in the universe, and the singing of the liturgy, as well as the ascent to mystical vision in this life), and because the economic self-sufficiency of abbeys, essential for withdrawal from the contamination of the secular, was central to the Benedictine tradition and the basis of the requirement that the monks work (most of them in the field); various compromises (including recruiting a lay workforce) were reached by the different orders in the course of the centuries: the eremitic orders and the Cistercians were the most uncompromising in making mystical ascent the principal activity.

49. Here is Macarius, here is Romuald: These are names of important leaders of eremitic monasticism, as saint Benedict was the dominant influence in the

cenobitic form. There were several early Egyptian hermits named Macarius; Dante may have drawn on Iacopo of Varazzo's *Golden Legend*, which mentions only one, conflating the two earliest, Macarius the Ancient (ca. 200–ca. 290), credited with being the first anchorite in the desert near Thebes, and Macarius of Alexandria (perhaps a generation later), in the desert south of Alexandria. Saint Romuald (born in Ravenna 959, died 1007) was, with saint Bruno of Asti (the founder of the Carthusians), the leading influence in the eleventh-century Italian revival of eremitism (see the note to 21.106–11). The Egyptian founder of cenobitic monasticism, saint Anthony the Great, is mentioned by Dante (29.124) only in connection with the decline of his order. The monastic orders are to be distinguished from the mendicant orders (see Cantos 11–12, with notes, and Additional Note 5). Though omitting the Greeks and the Cluniac reforms but including saint Bernard of Clairvaux in Cantos 31–32, Dante's survey mentions most of the highlights of the history of monasticism.

52–60. The affection you show . . . your countenance openly: Since Justinian's face became veiled in his joy (5.133–39), until now the pilgrim has not asked to see the face of any soul (cf. the other instance in 25.118–29). The request and the eagerness it expresses are probably to be taken as measures of the great veneration Dante felt for the founder of western monasticism; the meeting with saint Benedict is part of the general rising back through time to origins (see the notes to Cantos 24–26 and Additional Note 14). It may be noted here that in a famous passage (*Conv.* 4.28.9) Dante expresses his respect for both monastic and mendicant orders but insists that the inner perfection of Christian devotion, especially appropriate in the fourth age of life, is open to lay persons, including married couples.

61–96. Brother, your high . . . remedy will be for this: The saint's answer leads smoothly into the description of the ultimate goal, back to Jacob's ladder as leading to it, and then to the current decadence of European monasticism.

61–67. Brother, your high . . . turns on no pole: The "last sphere" is of course the Empyrean, beyond space, reached in Canto 30. The saint omits the fact that even in the Empyrean beatitude will be perfect only after the Resurrection, when souls will be reunited with their bodies (what the pilgrim will see will be only an "appearance": 30.43–45; see Introduction, pp. 14–15; cf. 14.13–18 and 37–60).

65–66. there alone is every part where it has always been: This verse is difficult to interpret: it must be a reference to the eternal presence of all creation and history ("every part") to the mind of God.

68–96. our ladder is the bridge . . . remedy will be for this: The saint returns to the ladder of Genesis 28. That it is "our ladder" is of course a reference to its special appropriateness to Saturn as the star of the contemplatives, but also—and primarily—because from saint Benedict on it had been the founding metaphor of monasticism. The return facilitates the transition to the condemnation of the current abuses: the monks no longer practice poverty and the mystical ascent but are exclusively concerned with the great wealth the monasteries have accumulated.

69. flies so far beyond your sight: A recall of 21.29–30, a departure from the biblical dream; cf. the note to 21.28–33.

70–75. the patriarch Jacob . . . a waste of paper: In these two terzinas, Jacob's ladder provides the transition to the condemnation. The crucial verse is Gen. 28.12: "And he saw in his sleep a ladder standing upon the earth, and the top of it touching Heaven: the angels also of God ascending and descending by it." The first terzina refers only to the upper part of the ladder (the second part of the verse); the second terzina, however, refers to the first part of the verse, where the ladder stands upon the earth, especially within the monastery walls, where the monks no longer pay any attention to the Benedictine Rule.

76–78. The walls that used . . . full of evil flour: The reference to the monastery walls becomes explicit: the abbeys having become caves [*spelonche*] is an allusion to Matt. 21.13 (the casting of the money changers out of the Temple): "Vos autem fecistis [domum meam] illam speluncam latronum" [You have made (my house) a cave of thieves] (a passage nearly identical in all the synoptic Gospels; natural caves were proverbial hiding places for outlaws). The monks' cowls being "full of evil flour" may refer to the hiding of coin, or perhaps to the obesity denounced by Peter Damiani (21.130–36; and see below, lines 85–87); in the mention of *flour*, the underlying theme of harvest (see 21.118–20 and 22.151, with notes) becomes explicit here, but it is the wrong kind of harvest.

79–96. But heavy usury . . . remedy will be for this: The passage begins and ends with reference to God's will (lines 80 and 95), disobeyed by the monks, whose punishment will come. The abuse is now literally identified: the monks' hearts are fixed on wealth, so intensely that no usury is worse; the harvest motif continues with the term *fruit* (on the idea of usury as unnatural in making money "bear offspring," see the note to *Inf.* 11.110–11, Durling 1981a, Capitani 1976). The crisis of abuse that Dante refers to was the result of a number of factors: the intense appeal of the new Franciscan and Dominican movements,

close to the population and based in the cities; a resultant decline in the prestige of cloistered life; the enormous wealth possessed by the monasteries and dioceses in lands, industries (e.g., mills), and chattel, more and more regarded by the laity as oppressive; and the increasing prosperity, urbanization, and mercantilization of society. Dante is not alone: the late thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries saw a major challenge to the wealth of the Church from the "spiritual" Franciscans, who advocated a return to the poverty of the Apostles; Dante shared many of their views. A quarter-century after Dante's death, Boccaccio's *Decameron* voiced many of the same criticisms and particularly satirized the monks' and friars' (and also the nuns') sexual mores.

82–84. for whatever the Church . . . or something uglier: Statement of principle: the Church (thus monasteries as well) is merely the trustee of wealth donated to it (or earned by it) and must use it in the interest of the faithful, especially the poor. It may not be given to relatives or "something uglier" (male favorites, concubines, or illegitimate offspring). Cf. *Mon.* 3.4.10, where Dante gives a famous definition of tyrants as those who "what is of public right do not pursue for the advantage of all, but attempt to force it to their own advantage."

85–96. The flesh of mortals . . . remedy will be for this: The saint attributes the universal decadence to the weakness of mortal flesh (Dante's term *blanda* means "soft, unused to hardship") and voices a rule that all beginnings turn bad in less time than it takes an oak tree to grow from an acorn to producing its own acorns. God must continually intervene.

88–93. Peter began without . . . white has turned black: Saint Peter represents the papacy, saint Benedict monasticism, saint Francis the mendicant orders; all began in poverty (cf. 21.127–35), and all have become inordinately rich, and you can see where each went wrong (*trascorrere* [to go astray], is parallel to Eng. *to transgress* [to step off the path]); cf. 11.118–39, and especially 12.106–20, the latter using both the metaphor of the track and an important instance of the harvest metaphor).

94–96. Truly Jordan . . . remedy will be for this: Two examples of God's miraculous intervention. The "sea drawing back" refers to the opening of the Red Sea to permit Moses and the Israelites to pass dryshod (Ex. 14.13–31; cf. Ps. 113.1–8). As a past event, "Jordan flowing backward" (Ps. 113.3–5) was caused by the standing of the waters of the Red Sea, into which Jordan flows, at the Exodus (it was associated in the exegetical tradition with the Apocalypse). The lines mean that God's correction of the degeneration of Christian institutions will not be as spectacular.

97–99. So he said, and then…whirlwind swept upward: The term *collegio* referred to any group bound together by a set of rules [Eng. *college*, from Lat. *collegium*: *cum/con*, together, + *lego*, to bind]. Most educational colleges (such as those at Oxford and Cambridge) were originally ecclesiastical foundations for clerics.

98–99. gathered itself…whirlwind swept upward: Spinning has been repeated by the souls in Saturn as an expression of special joy (21.79–81, 136–38); cf. Elijah's mounting to Heaven (4 Kings 2.11); in the Old Testament, God speaks from the whirlwind (Job 38.1), and the prophets name it as signifying his anger (e.g., Is. 40.24, Jer. 23.19). The contemplatives sweep upward along the ladder, of course.

100–154. My sweet lady…to her lovely eyes: The transition to, and first stage of, the sojourn in the sphere of the fixed stars (it will last until Canto 27).

100–105. My sweet lady…equal my wing: Another miraculously swift ascent: one might perhaps expect the upward flight to reach Heaven (as presumably that of the contemplatives does), but that is not Dante's plan: two spheres in space remain to be visited: those of the fixed stars and of the *primum mobile*, the outer shell of the universe.

103–4. nor down here…descend naturally: One cannot help thinking of the bitter stairways of 17.55–60; here, as in the text of Jacob's dream, mounting is mentioned before descending (a fact that, as Dante knew, saint Benedict and the later tradition regarded as significant, as referring to the faithful and then the rebellious angels).

106–54. So may I return…to her lovely eyes: This first stage of the pilgrim's stay in the sphere of the fixed stars includes his arrival in his own native sign, Gemini, and his backward glance, at Beatrice's urging, down through the entire cosmos (based in part on the famous passage in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* [*Dream of Scipio*]; see the note to lines 133–53).

106–11. So may I return…and was within it: The next-to-last of the six addresses to the reader (listed in the note to 2.1–18). The poet swears by his desire to return to Heaven (for the asseverative formula, see *Inf.* 16.129, 20.19–25; *Purg.* 8.112–17), as in *Purg.* 16.127–29 when he swears by his desire for the *Comedy* to have lasting favor.

106–8. that devout triumph…beat my breast: The triumph is that of Christ and the Church Triumphant, which the pilgrim will soon see (it is anticipated in lines 131–32), and in several forms (see 23.16–120, 31.61–69). That the poet

must continue to do penance for his sins indicates that the idea that he returns from his journey in a permanent state of grace, as is sometimes asserted, is profoundly erroneous: his dream inspired his poem, but penitence is not accomplished in a dream.

109–11. you would not any sooner . . . and was within it: Another of the famous instances of *hysteron proteron* in the *Comedy* (cf. 2.23–24, with note), expressing simultaneity or the next thing to it. The "sign that follows the Bull" is of course that of Gemini; one notes that Dante does not clearly distinguish between the zodiacal signs and the constellations (see the diagram on page xiii of our *Purgatorio*).

112–23. O glorious stars . . . draws me to itself: Invocation of the stars of Gemini, which Dante considered his natal sign: the poet first acknowledges ("riconosco" [I recognize]; cf. 29.58–60, with note) that all his "ingegno" [poetic talent] comes from them, because the sun ("the father of every mortal life") was rising and setting with them at his birth and because they were assigned to be the part of the sphere of fixed stars ("the high wheel") that he visits in his ascent (this is of course part of the pilgrim's return to his origins, like his meeting with Cacciaguida). For the importance to Dante of his natal horoscope, see also Additional Notes 12 and 14.

121–23. To you now . . . draws me to itself: This is an invocation, as if of a Muse, asking for help. His soul now "devoutly sighs" to the source of his poetic gifts because his power to describe his increasingly arduous imaginings depends on their active influence, *in the present*, on his talent. (This is a characteristic type of medieval astrological belief; for instance, Albert the Great writes that gems engraved with astrological signs must be carved while those signs are powerful—e.g., ascending—or while the sun or the planet that is their "ruler" visits them—and that their "virtue" will be effective only when the situation of their carving is repeated.) Dante may well have been writing this passage while the sun or Mercury was in Gemini.

124–32. You are so close . . . this rounded aether: The first "event" here in Gemini, in the sphere of fixed stars, is that Beatrice invites the pilgrim to look back down through the spherical cosmos to the earth. She says he has now risen so far that his eyes are equal to the sight.

128–29. look back down . . . beneath your feet: The commentators properly call attention to the important parallel with the *Dream of Scipio* in the

downward gaze through the cosmos. But they have not called attention to the two texts Beatrice alludes to here. The first is Vergil, *Georgics* 2.475–92; the climactic lines are 490–92:

> felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas
> atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum
> subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari.
> [Happy he who has been able to know the causes of things,
> who has placed beneath his feet all fears, inexorable fate,
> and the clamor of greedy Acheron.]

Dante was clearly struck by the parallel with Psalm 8.6–8:

> Thou hast made him [man] a little lower than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honor: and hast set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast subjected all things under his feet [*omnia subiecisti sub pedibus eius*].

Dante avoids Vergil's *subiecit* and the Vulgate's *subiecisti* for more neutral phrasing, but "sotto li tuoi piedi" [beneath your feet] is unmistakable. Note that this traditional metaphor for the moral/existential superiority to fate and the rest of the cosmos has nothing to do with the question of the presence of the pilgrim's body.

132. through this rounded aether: Unlike Plato, who supposed the heavenly bodies were made of the same matter as sublunar things, Aristotle wrote (*De caelo* 1.2–3) that their eternal lack of change made it clear that the planets and their heavens were made of a "fifth essence," transparent and impervious to change, which he dubbed *aether*, whence "etherial."

133–53. With my sight . . . to the river mouths: As the commentators have pointed out, in this passage Dante has clearly in mind Cicero's famous description of the view down to earth imagined in Scipio's dream of meeting his father and his grandfather Africanus in the Milky Way (imagined as the abode after death of those devoted to the fatherland; cf. *Par.* 4.49–63, on Plato's idea, used here by Cicero, that the souls of the just return to their stars after death). Scipio is narrating:

> As I gazed I saw that everything else seemed extremely bright and marvelous—for there were stars that from here we have never seen, and the greatness of all of them was such as we have never suspected them to be, and among them the smallest was the one farthest from the heavens and

closest to the earth, shining with the light of another, and the globes of these stars easily surpassed the magnitude of the earth—indeed, already *the earth itself seemed so tiny to me that our Empire, by which we hold as it were a mere point of it, almost made me ashamed.*

Which when I kept gazing at, "I wonder," said Africanus, "how long you will fix your mind on the earth? Do you not see what temple you have entered? You can see that all things are joined together by nine spheres, of which one is the highest celestial sphere, embracing all the others, itself the highest god, protecting and containing the others, where are fixed those eternal courses of the wandering stars. Within them are held the seven that turn with a motion contrary to the heavens, of which one sphere is held by the star that on earth they call Saturn's; next is the brightness, prosperous and health-giving to humankind, that is called Jove; then the ruddy star, frightful on earth, which you call Mars; then the sun obtains all the middle region, the leader and prince and moderator of the others, the mind and tempering of the world, of such magnitude that he cleanses and fills all things with his light. *Him as companions Venus and Mercury follow in their circuits*, and in the lowest sphere the moon turns, lit by the rays of the sun. But lower down there is nothing except what is mortal and deciduous, except for the spirits given by the gods to humankind, while above the moon all things are eternal. For the one that is in the midst, the ninth, Earth, never moves but is the lowest, so that all weights fall to it by their own inclination." (*SS* 3.7–4.3; italics added.)[1]

1. Ex quo omnia mihi contemplanti praeclara cetera et mirabilia videbantur—erant autem eae stellae quas numquam ex hoc loco vidimus et eae magnitudines omnium quas esse numquam suspicati sumus, ex quibus erat ea minima quae ultima a caelo, citima terris luce lucebat aliena, stellarum autem globi terrae magnitudinem facile vincebant—iam ipsa terra ita mihi parva visa est ut me imperii nostri quo quasi punctum eius attingimus paeniteret.

Quam cum magis intuerer, "quaeso," inquit Africanus, "quo usque humi defixa tua mens erit? Nonne aspicis quae in templa veneris? Novem tibi orbibus vel potius globis conexa sunt omnia, quorum unus est caelestis extimus qui reliquos omnes complectitur, summus ipse deus, arcens et continens ceteros in quo sunt infixi illi qui volvuntur stellarum cursus sempiterni. Cui subiecti sunt septem qui versantur retro contrario motu atque caelum. E quibus unum globum possidet illa quam in terris Saturniam nominant, deinde est hominum generi prosperus et salutaris ille fulgor qui dicitur Iovis, tum rutilus horribilisque terris quem Martium dicitis, deinde de septem mediam fere regionem sol obtinet, dux et princeps et moderator luminum reliquorum, mens muindi et temperatio, tanta magnitudine ut cuncta sua luce lustret et compleat. Hunc ut comites consequuntur Veneis alter, alter Mercurii cursus, in infimoque orbe luna radiis solis accensa convertitur. Infra autem iam nihil est nisi mortale et caducum praeter animos munere deorum hominum generi datos, supra lunam sunt aeterna omnia. Nam ea quae est media et nona, tellus, neque movetur et infima est, et in eam feruntur omnia nutu suo pondera.

One notes that Cicero has Scipio's gaze descend all the way down to the moon and then the earth in a first descent, and then has Africanus describe the spheres of the cosmos in descending order, from the fixed stars (the idea of the *primum mobile*, enclosing all the others, was unknown to Cicero) down to earth. So also Dante: first the pilgrim's gaze goes all the way down to earth (lines 133–38), ending with a smile at its baseness and a scornful remark (compare the first of the italicized phrases above; Dante's lines also draw on *SS* 7); the second phase (lines 139–48), like Cicero's, is a detailed list of all planets, with two differences: that the pilgrim's eye moves through the list upwards, and that Dante twice varies the ascending order by grouping the sun, Mercury, and Venus; and Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars (both groups in that order), a procedure almost certainly suggested by Cicero's close grouping of the lower three.

139–50. I saw the daughter . . . distant in dwelling: The planets, in ascending order; all of them except Jupiter are named by their mythological parents, in Saturn's case as father of Jupiter (on Dante's periphrases regarding the planets, cf. the note to 8.10–12).

139–41. The daughter of Latona . . . rare and dense: The side of the moon that is turned away from earth lacks the spots which in Canto 3 the pilgrim had thought were due to rare and dense material, until instructed otherwise by Beatrice. Dante's idea is probably that since the influence of the moon is always directed toward the earth, there would be no formal principle for such spots on the side always turned upward.

142–44. The sight of your son . . . close about him: Dante's description leaps over Mercury and Venus to the sun, and then echoes the phrase italicized in the second paragraph of the quotation from Cicero. The son of Hyperion is Sol (the sun; cf. *Met.* 2.1, 4.192), Maia is the mother of Mercury (cf. *Met.* 2.685–86), and Dione of Venus (cf. *Aen.* 3.19, *Par.* 8.1–9, with notes).

145–47. From there I saw . . . they do of their *where*: Again a leap to Jupiter from the sun, and another leap to Saturn (Jupiter's father) and then to Mars (Jupiter's son). These three planets have orbits larger than that of the earth, and all of them seem to move more slowly than earth; from the vantage of the fixed stars, the pilgrim can see the planets moving, but the phrase does not mean that he can grasp their complicated forward and retrograde patterns, which are realized very slowly.

148–50. And all the seven . . . distant in dwelling: He saw the size (cf. Cicero) of the planets and how far away each is from earth and from the firmament. The eye again moves over the entire panorama.

151–53. The little threshing floor . . . back to her lovely eyes: Again the eye twice moves down and up (line 151, down; line 152, up; line 153, down again; and line 154, finally back up to Beatrice).

151. The little threshing floor that makes us so ferocious: The inhabited earth is here thought of as a threshing floor; in antiquity threshing was typically done by having an ox tread the grain under foot, after which the chaff was fanned away and ultimately burned, while the heavier kernels were gathered and stored; there are many biblical passages, especially in the prophets and Gospels, concerning the process, often used as a figure of the Last Judgment; for instance: "Cuius ventilabrum in manu sua: et permundabit aream suam: et congregabit triticum suum in horreum, paleas autem comburet igni inextinguibili" [His threshing fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire] (Matt. 3.12; cf. Is. 41.13; Jer. 23.28, 51.33); also famous is "Non ligabis os bovis terentis in area fruges tuas" [Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out thy grain upon thy floor] (Deut. 25.4; cited by saint Paul in 1 Cor. 10.9, 1 Tim. 5.18). That human beings are so ferocious for such a tiny plot as the habitable earth, all the while forgetting that they themselves are being winnowed and separated into the saved and the damned, is all compressed here into one of Dante's most brilliantly epigrammatic, ironic sayings (*aiuola* is the diminutive of *aia* [threshing floor, cf. Lat. *area*], as Buti points out; it is also used in 27.86). It is part of the large system of harvest references in the *Paradiso* that our notes have been following (cf. 23.19–21). One should remember that in Dante's time threshing was done by flailing the grain with long, heavy hinged rods (see the scene of threshing in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco of "Good Government" in the Sala della Pace in Siena, which emphasizes the violence of the activity and shows how much the threshing rods resemble weapons).

Doubt has been cast on this interpretation, first made explicit by Longfellow (but cf. Buti), on the supposed grounds that the Boethian passage that uses the term *area* of the smallness of the parts of earth where glory is sought (*Consol.* 2.7.5, itself based on *SS* 7) makes no mention of threshing, the term *area* being commonly used also for any small enclosed space. But note the very first use of the term in the *Consolatio* (2.1.16), where Philosophia explains: "Postremo aequo animo toleres oportet quicquid intra fortunae aream geritur cum semel iugo eius colla submiseris" [Finally you must accept with equanimity whatever occurs within Fortune's *area* once you have submitted your neck to her yoke]; occupied by the yoked ox, Fortune's *area* is unmistakably a threshing floor.

152. as I was turning with the eternal Twins: Strongly juxtaposing the pilgrim's vantage point with the distant earth, at a moment when he is about to turn away from the world of becoming, the line is also a reminder both of the astrological significance for the nature of his natal sign, and that (as we see in 27.76–87) what he can see on earth is changing beneath him as the heavens turn.

153. all of it . . . to the river mouths: All of the habitable earth is visible, from the mountains (presumably the Caucasus and the Alps) to the river mouths (of the Ebro, near Gibraltar, and the Rhone in the west, and the Ganges in the east: since antiquity the two extremes were the generally recognized limits of the *Oikoumenè* (the inhabited portion of the earth, in the classical conception; see the map of the climata on p. 379, and cf. *Purg*. 27.1–6, with note).

154. Then I turned my eyes back to her lovely eyes: We have been taught to imagine Beatrice's eyes as immeasurably more beautiful than anything on earth, more beautiful even than the serene and majestic spectacle of the entire cosmos. A more effective close to this canto could hardly be imagined.

CANTO 23

Come l'augello intra l'amate fronde,
posato al nido de' suoi dolce nati
la notte che le cose ci nasconde,
che—per veder li aspetti disïati
e per trovar lo cibo onde li pasca,
in che gravi labor li sono aggrati—
previene il tempo in su aperta frasca
e con ardente affetto il sole aspetta,
fiso guardando pur che l'alba nasca:
così la donna mia stava eretta
e attenta, rivolta inver' la plaga
sotto la quale il sol mostra men fretta,
sì che, veggendola io sospesa e vaga,
fecimi qual è quei che disïando
altro vorria, e sperando s'appaga.
Ma poco fu tra uno e altro *quando*—
del mio attender, dico, e del vedere
lo ciel venir più e più rischiarando—,
e Bëatrice disse: "Ecco le schiere
del trïunfo di Cristo e tutto 'l frutto
ricolto del girar di queste spere!"
Pariemi che 'l suo viso ardesse tutto,
e li occhi avea di letizia sì pieni
che passarmen convien sanza costrutto.
Quale ne' plenilunïi sereni
Trivïa ride tra le ninfe etterne
che dipingon lo ciel per tutti i seni:
vid' i' sopra migliaia di lucerne
un Sol che tutte quante l'accendea,
come fa 'l nostro le viste superne,

CANTO 23

Fixed stars, continued: Triumph of Christ—his withdrawal—
the Virgin Mary—the archangel Gabriel—ascent of Mary

Like a bird within the beloved foliage,
perched on the nest of its sweet offspring during
the night that hides all things from us,
as—in order to see their yearned-for faces
and to find the food to nourish them, in which
heavy labors are pleasant to it—
it anticipates the time upon an open branch
and with burning affect awaits the sun, gazing
fixedly for the first birth of dawn:
so my lady was erect and alert, turned toward
the quarter where the sun shows least haste,
so that I, seeing her in suspense and eager,
became as one who in desire wishes for
something else and is soothed by hope.
But there was little between one and another
when—of my waiting, I mean, and of my seeing
the sky grow brighter and brighter—,
and Beatrice said: "Behold the armies of
Christ's triumph and all the fruit harvested from
the turning of these spheres!"
It seemed to me her face was all aflame, and
her eyes were so full of joy that I must pass on
without expressing them.
As on a cloudless night of full moon Trivia
laughs among the eternal nymphs that paint the
sky in all its arcs:
I saw, above thousands of lanterns, a Sun
that kindled all of them, as ours does the sights
above,

e per la viva luce trasparea
la lucente Sustanza tanto chiara
nel viso mio che non la sostenea.
Oh Bëatrice, dolce guida e cara!
Ella mi disse: "Quel che ti sobranza
è virtù da cui nulla si ripara.
Quivi è la Sapïenza e la Possanza
ch' aprì le strade tra 'l Cielo e la terra,
onde fu già sì lunga disïanza."
Come foco di nube si diserra,
per dilatarsi sì che non vi cape,
e fuor di sua natura in giù s'atterra:
la mente mia così, tra quelle dape
fatta più grande, di sé stessa uscìo,
e che si fesse rimembrar non sape.
"Apri li occhi e riguarda qual son io:
tu hai vedute cose, che possente
se' fatto a sostener lo riso mio."
Io era come quei che si risente
di visïone oblita e che s'ingegna
indarno di ridurlasi a la mente,
quand' io udi' questa proferta, degna
di tanto grato che mai non si stingue
del libro che 'l preterito rassegna.
Se mo sonasser tutte quelle lingue
che Polimnïa con le suore fero
del latte lor dolcissimo più pingue
per aiutarmi, al millesmo del vero
non si verria cantando il santo riso
e quanto il santo aspetto facea mero;
e così, figurando il Paradiso,
convien saltar lo sacrato poema
come chi trova suo cammin riciso.
Ma chi pensasse il ponderoso tema
e l'omero mortal che se ne carca
nol biasmerebbe se sott' esso trema:
non è pareggio da picciola barca
quel che fendendo va l'ardita prora,
né da nocchier ch'a sé medesmo parca.

and through its living light the bright
Substance showed so bright to my eyes
that they could not endure it.

Oh Beatrice, sweet, dear guide! She said to
me: "What overpowers you is might against
which there is no defence.

There is the Wisdom and the Power that
opened the pathways between Heaven and
earth, for which there had been such long yearning."

As fire is unlocked from a cloud, expanding
beyond containment there, and against its
nature downward enearths itself:

so my mind, made larger than itself amid that
feast, went out of itself, and what it became it
cannot remember.

"Open your eyes and see what I am: you
have seen things that have made you strong
enough to endure my smile."

I was like one who comes to himself from a
forgotten vision and struggles in vain to draw it
back to his mind,

when I heard this offer, worthy of such
gratitude as never shall be canceled from the
book that relates the past.

If now were to sound all those tongues which
Polyhymnia and her sisters with their sweetest
milk made richest

to help me, we could not come within a
thousandth of the truth, singing her holy smile
and how bright it made her holy face,

and thus, figuring forth Paradise, the
consecrated poem must leap over, like one who
finds his path cut off.

But whoever thinks of the ponderous theme
and the mortal shoulder that has taken it on, will
not blame it for trembling beneath the burden:

it is no voyage for a little bark, the one my
daring prow goes cutting, nor for a helmsman
who spares himself.

"Perché la faccia mia sì t'innamora
che tu non ti rivolgi al bel giardino
che sotto i raggi di Cristo s'infiora?
Quivi è la rosa in che 'l Verbo divino
carne si fece, quivi son li gigli
al cui odor si prese il buon cammino."
Così Beatrice, e io, che a' suoi consigli
tutto era pronto, ancora mi rendei
a la battaglia de' debili cigli.
Come a raggio di sol che puro mei
per fratta nube già prato di fiori
vider, coverti d'ombra, li occhi miei:
vid' io così più turbe di splendori
folgorate di sù da raggi ardenti,
sanza veder principio di folgóri.
O benigna Virtù che sì li 'mprenti,
sù t'essaltasti per largirmi loco
a li occhi lì, che non t'eran possenti.
Il nome del bel fior ch' io sempre invoco
e mane e sera, tutto mi ristrinse
l'animo ad avvisar lo maggior foco,
e come ambo le luci mi dipinse
il quale e il quanto de la viva stella
che là sù vince come qua giù vinse,
per entro il Cielo scese una facella
formata in cerchio a guisa di corona,
e cinsela e girossi intorno ad ella.
Qualunque melodia più dolce suona
qua giù e più a sé l'anima tira
parrebbe nube che squarciata tona,
comparata al sonar di quella lira
onde si coronava il bel zaffiro
del quale il Ciel più chiaro s'inzaffira.
"Io sono amore angelico che giro
l'alta letizia che spira del ventre
che fu albergo del nostro Disiro,
e girerommi, Donna del Ciel, mentre
che seguirai tuo Figlio e farai dia
più la spera suprema perché lì entre."

"Why does my face so enamor you that you
do not turn to the lovely garden blooming under
the rays of Christ?
There is the rose in which the divine Word
was made flesh; there are the lilies whose
perfume won people to the good path."
Thus Beatrice, and I, always prompt to her
counsels, gave myself once again to the battle
of the weak eyelids.
As by a ray of pure sunlight pouring down
through a torn cloud my eyes, protected by
shade, have seen a meadow of flowers:
so there I saw many throngs of splendors
struck, as by lightning from above, by ardent
beams, without seeing the source of the flashing.
O kindly Power that so stamp them, you
withdrew on high to grant room for my eyes
there, not strong enough to sustain you.
The name of the lovely flower that I ever
invoke both morning and evening drew all my
spirit to perceive the greatest fire,
and as my two eyes depicted for me the
nature and greatness of the living star that has
the victory up there as it did down here,
from within Heaven there descended a torch
formed in a circle, in the guise of a crown, and it
girded her and revolved about her.
Whatever melody down here sounds
sweetest and most draws the soul would seem
a shattered cloud thundering,
compared with the sounding of the lyre that
crowned the beautiful sapphire with which the
brightest Heaven is ensapphired.
"I am angelic love, wheeling about the deep
joy that breathes from the womb that sheltered
our Desire,
and I will wheel, Lady of Heaven, until you
follow your Son and make brighter the highest
sphere by entering there."

Così la circulata melodia
si sigillava, e tutti li altri lumi
facean sonare il nome di Maria.
Lo real manto di tutti i volumi
del mondo, che più ferve e più s'avviva
ne l'alito di Dio e nei costumi,
avea sopra di noi l'interna riva
tanto distante che la sua parvenza,
là dov' io era, ancor non appariva;
però non ebber li occhi miei potenza
di seguitar la coronata fiamma,
che si levò appresso la sua semenza.
E come fantolin che 'nver' la mamma
tende le braccia poi che 'l latte prese,
per l'animo che 'nfin di fuor s'infiamma:
ciascun di quei candori in sù si stese
con la sua cima, sì che l'alto affetto
ch' elli avieno a Maria mi fu palese.
Indi rimaser lì nel mio cospetto,
"*Regina coeli*" cantando sì dolce
che mai da me non si partì 'l diletto.
Oh quanta è l'ubertà che si soffolce
in quelle arche richissime che fuoro
a seminar qua giù buone bobolce!
Quivi si vive e gode del tesoro
che s'acquistò piangendo ne lo essilio
di Babillòn, ove si lasciò l'oro.
Quivi trïunfa, sotto l'alto Filio
di Dio e Maria, di sua vittoria,
e con l'antico e col novo concilio,
colui che tien le chiavi di tal gloria.

Thus did the circling melody seal itself, and
all the other lights made the name of Mary
resound.
The royal mantle of all the world's turnings,
which burns most and is most enlivened in the
breath of God and in his ways,
had its internal shores so far above us that its
image, where I was, did not yet appear;
thus my eyes did not have the strength to
follow the crowned flame that raised itself after
its seed.
And like a little child raising its arms toward
its mamma, after taking the milk, because of its
grateful spirit flaming outwardly:
each of those incandescent fires stretched
upward with its peak, so that the deep love they
felt for Mary was visible to me.
Then they remained there before my eyes,
singing "*Regina coeli*" so sweetly that the delight
of it has never left me.
Oh how great is the abundance stored in those
rich arks that were such good plowmen for the
sowing down here!
There they live and take joy in the treasure
that was acquired weeping in the exile of
Babylon, where the gold was left behind.
There triumphs for his victory, under the high
Son of God and of Mary, with both the old and
the new consistory,
he who holds the keys to such glory.

NOTES

1–139. Like a bird . . . the keys to such glory: The canto represents a single action, the approach and withdrawal of Christ and of Mary, accompanied by hosts of the blessed, concluding with a celebration of the apostle Peter. After keen anticipation (lines 1–15), Beatrice announces the arrival of all the souls harvested by Heaven (16–33); the pilgrim's sight is overwhelmed (lines 34–45), and she calls his gaze to her, but the poet is unable to describe her (lines 46–69); she directs his sight to Christ, now veiled, and to Mary, feted by an angel (70–111); the procession then recedes toward the *primum mobile*, leaving Peter, heir to Christ's victory (112–39), with other souls who remain until 27.75. The canto recapitulates the descent-ascent pattern of salvation history (cf. 7.19–148 and notes), including reference to the Advent, Incarnation, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ, as well as to Marian feasts (see note to lines 88–111), but also Beatrice's mediation, since the *Vita nova*, of that pattern to Dante.

1–15. Like a bird . . . soothed by hope: The simile of the bird, of unspecified species and gender, brings out aspects of Beatrice's relation to the pilgrim: line 1 by restating a verse of Guido Guinizelli's (see *VN* 20.3) in which Love is said to cleave to the gentle heart "as the bird in the wood repairs to the greenery" [*come lauzello in selva alla verdura*], recalling the lyric beginnings of the poet's devotion; in lines 4–6, Beatrice is nourishing and maternal; while lines 7–9, evoke, with the word *alba*, the Provençal lyric genre of that name about lovers parting at dawn (see 10.139–48 and notes). Compare verses 12–13 of the *alba* of Giraut de Bornelh:

> Non dormatz plus, qu' eu aug chantar l'auzel
> que vai queren lo jorn per lo boscatge.
> [Sleep no longer, for I hear the bird sing
> as it goes seeking the day amid the wood].

Juliet's "It was the nightingale, and not the lark," as she delays Romeo, is a later instance (*Romeo and Juliet* 3.5.2). See Picone 1989 and Additional Note 1.

The *alba* was also known in sacred versions (see note to 9.37–42), and Dante's simile reassigns the roles fixed for the genre; as the solicitous bird, Beatrice is both the beloved lady [Provençal *domna*] and the watchman [*guaita*], while the expected spouse, replacing the jealous husband [*gilos*], is

Christ. Indeed, Beatrice's expectation in the simile is modeled on the expectation of the Advent of Christ, who comes as the rising sun (Mal. 4.2: "Unto you that fear my name the Sun of justice shall arise [*orietur vobis . . . Sol iustitiae*]"; and see Perugi in *LDT*. The procession and pageant that follows recapitulates the coming of this sun; see also 32.16–27 and notes

1–2. Like a bird . . . perched on the nest: Picone 1989 notes parallels with the simile introducing Paolo and Francesca (see *Inf.* 5.82–84 and note).

5. to find the food to nourish them: Out of metaphor, Beatrice imparts the food of wisdom (cf. 2.10–12, 10.22–27 and notes, and see line 43). Her solicitude contrasts with Ugolino's denial of spiritual food to his children (see *Inf.* 33.37–48 and Chapter 6 of Durling/Martinez 1990).

6. heavy labors: The phrase recalls Aeneas's petition to Apollo "who always pities the heavy labors [*gravis . . . labores*] of Troy" (*Aen.* 6.56; cf. *Inf.* 2.1–3 and note).

7–9. it anticipates the time . . . first birth of dawn: Commentators have seen here a reference to Lactantius's poem *De ave phoenice*, on the Phoenix, regenerated by the rising sun, especially lines 41–42: "Turned to the place where Phoebus is born it [the aged bird] awaits the new rays, the rising brightness."

10–12. so my lady was erect . . . shows least haste: The tenor of the simile is finally identified as Beatrice.

11–12. the quarter where the sun shows least haste: When the sun crosses the meridian at noon, it appears to be moving more slowly across the sky. The pilgrim and Beatrice rose to the first sphere of heaven at noon, the moment that points to the timelessness of Heaven itself (see 1.44–45 and note); the passage here is thus an ideal conjunction of dawn and noon, first light and full light.

13–15. so that I, seeing her . . . soothed by hope: Beatrice's anticipation stimulates the pilgrim's expectation, and his confidence in her erases any fear; contrast the anxious waiting under Virgil's guidance for the heavenly messenger at *Inf.* 9.7–9 (see note).

16–45. But there was little . . . it cannot remember: "As the Romans, when they triumph, parade before the car the spoils taken from the enemy, so the author feigns that Christ comes with the prizes he took from the devil, both

the holy fathers from Limbo, and the holy Christians saved by the Passion" (Buti). In the liturgy, this triumph is signified by Christ's entrance to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (*Rationale* 6.67), when the crowds preceding and those following represent the saved before and after the Crucifixion (see line 138), that is, all the saved, as here. This configuration was anticipated at 19.103–5 and 20.100–105 (see notes); see also 31.25–27 and Additional Note 4.

16–21. But there was little . . . turning of these spheres: The perception of a brief interval of increasing brightness is juxtaposed, in six lines, to a much larger panorama: the legions of souls that receive the pilgrim and Beatrice: they are the final cause of the existence of the heavens, which are ordained to influence human lives according to the designs of Providence (see 8.94–137, 97–136 and notes).

16–18. But there was little . . . brighter and brighter: The gradualness of the brightening and the sunrise analogy echo the first appearance of Heaven's angel at *Purg.* 2.13–39, the now remote first stage in the reception of souls; for emphasis on a brightening horizon, see 14.67–69; on intervals of time, see 29.1–9 and note.

21. the turning of these spheres: The metaphor of harvested fruit makes this an image of the Last Judgment, with the harvesting done by the whirling of the spheres, both indicating their operation and suggesting the action of a scythe, the traditional reaping tool; cf. Apoc. 14.15. See note to lines 130–32, and see 22.151 and note; also 12.118–20 and note.

19–20: Behold the armies of Christ's triumph: The hosts of Heaven (chiefly human souls, but see 31.1–30 and note) testify to Christ's victory over death in the Resurrection, without which no human souls would be saved. The apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus represents the descent into Hell and defeat of Satan as a military expedition (see note to lines 16–45, and *Inf.* 4.52–63 and note), and the triumphal note is often heard in these cantos: see 22.106–7, 131; and 27.72. Coordinated with the descent-ascent pattern on the ladder (21.31–33, 27.67–72) the triumph here is in effect a procession down and up the ladder of contemplation, echoing both the defeat of Hell and Christ's entry into Jerusalem. See Additional Note 4.

25–33. As on a cloudless night . . . could not endure it: Christ shines on the blessed like the full moon among stars; line 30 then compares him to the planetary sun as light, center, and ruler of the physical cosmos (cf. *SS* 4), lending its light to planets and stars ("the sights above"; see *Conv.* 3.2.5; also

3.12.7). That the moon "laughs" in a sky "painted" with stars depends on the unstated middle term of the moon as a flower in a field, which emerges explicitly at lines 70–75, at the midpoint of the canto (Perugi in *LDT*); the rhetorical figure employed is known as transumption.

25–27. As on a cloudless night . . . in all its arcs: See Horace, *Epode* 15.1–2: "It was night, and the moon was shining in the clear sky, among the lesser stars" [*Nox erat et caelo fulgebat Luna sereno / inter minora sidera*]. Stars representing the virtues were identified as nymphs in Eden (see *Purg*. 31.106–9 and note), and find a place here in the sphere of the stars. *Trivïa* (cf. *Aen*. 6.13, 35) is the triple classical moon goddess Cynthia/Diana/Hecate (or Proserpina; see *Inf*. 10.79–81 and note). The anthropomorphic moon in the presence of Mary and Beatrice suggests the traditional identification of the moon with the Church, Christ's bride, or with Mary. Of the eighteen words in the terzina, nine contain the letter *i*, which appears thirteen times and is metrically emphasized in *plenilunii* and *Trivïa*; these constellate the verses with the letter as the stars do the sky.

28–29. I saw, above thousands of lanterns, a Sun: See Apoc. 22.5: "They shall not need . . . the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall enlighten them." Compare Beatrice in Eden as a veiled sun, in a "cloud of flowers" (*Purg*. 30.28; and see 30.22–33 and note); and note the rhyme at line 80.

Picone 1989 notes Dante's surprising allusion to the bathing Diana (who is also Cynthia, or the moon) espied by Actaeon (see *Inf*. 13.128 and note) as she looms above her protecting nymphs, in Ovid, *Met*. 3.181–82: "But taller than all by a head the goddess towered over them" [*tamen altior illis / ipsa dea est colloque tenus supereminet omnis*.] The same passage is drawn on at 27.28–30 (see note).

31–33. and through its living light . . . could not endure it: To speak of the unbearable brightness of Christ, here unnamed, Dante uses the philosophical term "substance," understood as a unity of matter and form existing of itself, and having attributes though not itself an attribute. Thus Christ's glorious body and soul shine through the "living light" of his divinity (for the relation of glorified bodies to the soul's effulgence, see 14.52–57, 25.118–29). Other commentators take "substance" to be Christ's divine nature, and "living light" his human one. Cf. *Purg*. 31.139, Beatrice as "splendor of eternal, living light."

This second, fleeting glimpse of Christ in *Paradiso* (cf. 14.103–8 and note), anticipates the final vision (see 33.52–145 and notes, and cf. *Purg*. 31.118–26 and note). Later it is stated that only Mary and Christ have their bodies in Heaven (25.128).

34. Oh Beatrice: The twenty-seventh use of the name of Beatrice in *Paradiso* (of forty-four; there are sixty-three in the whole *Comedy*); only here is it preceded by the exclamatory apostrophe (cf. *VN* 23.13). The lack of a verb suggests the astonishment caused by the vision.

37–39. There is the Wisdom . . . such long yearning: See 1 Cor. 1.24: "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." See also *Inf.* 4.53, *un possente* [a powerful one], also named here by Beatrice as the redeemer who opened the gates of Hell (*Inf.* 8.124–26 and note) and of Heaven (*Purg.* 10.34–36; *Par.* 7.48, 15.28–30 and notes), fulfilling the Advent expectation of souls in Limbo and of souls on earth (*Rationale* 4.5.1, 6.11.4–5); and see 15.25–27, 26.119–20 and notes. For the image of the way, see John 14.6, cited at 7.34–39, and Eph. 4.8–10. See note to lines 133–36.

40–45. As fire is unlocked . . . it cannot remember: The descent of fire as lightning, postulated earlier as an illustration of unnatural movement (1.127–41 and note; cf. *Purg.* 18.28–32 and note). For the pilgrim's obliviousness, see *VN* 41.6–7 and 1.7–8; see also *Par.* 33.58–62 and notes.

43–51. so my mind . . . back to his mind: In Dante's metaphor for the state of *excessus mentis* (cf. the vision of Peter, "an ecstasy of mind," in Acts 10.10), the pilgrim's mind is compared to lightning "unnaturally" escaping a cloud to strike the ground. Aquinas distinguishes Paul's rapture to Heaven from "ecstatic visions" like that of Peter (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 175 a. 3). "Forgotten" [*oblita*] at line 50 echoes the Apostles' ecstasy at the Transfiguration (Matt. 17.6, cited in *Ep.* 13.80.)

46–69. Open your eyes . . . a helmsman who spares himself: Though the pilgrim is overwhelmed by the appearance of Christ, Beatrice suggests that he can now endure her smile, omitted in the sphere of Saturn with a cautionary comparison to the burning of Semele (see 21.4–12 and note). But though assisted by all the Muses, he must renounce recounting that vision, and so the poem, for the first time (not the last; see 24.25), "skips," like a traveler leaping over an obstacle in his path. Note how the writing of the poem is correlated with images of both land and sea journeys (lines 63, 67–69; cf. 2.18 and note).

46–48. Open your eyes . . . to endure my smile: Dante's inability to endure Beatrice's or Lady Philosophy's smile is one of his constant complaints as a lyric poet ("Donne ch'avete," lines 55–56; "Amor che ne la mente," lines 55–62).

49–54. I was like one . . . that relates the past: Beatrice's offer of her smile evokes the image of the "book of my memory" at the outset of the *Vita nova*

(where her ineffable smile is recorded; see *VN* 1.1, 19.12, 21.4); gazing at Christ anticipates the final goal of the poem (33.139–45 and notes): thus the Alpha and Omega of the poet's career are again juxtaposed (see Additional Note 14).

52–53. worthy of such gratitude as never shall be canceled: Because it is indelibly written in memory; the phrasing recalls Guinizelli's gratitude to the pilgrim, *Purg*. 26.106–8 and note.

55–60. If now were to sound . . . it made her holy face: The reference to Polyhymnia, muse of sacred hymnody, and the other muses refurbishes Virgil's invocation, already drawn on by Dante for *Inf*. 28.1–6 (see note there, and also Ovid, *Met*. 8.533–35); the hundred iron tongues of war are supplanted by the milk-fed tongues suitable to Heaven. In his *Eclogues*, Dante uses the same topos of Muses nursing (*Eclogue* 1.1–2, 31–32, and, in a transferred sense, 59–64).

64–66. But whoever thinks . . . beneath the burden: Dante echoes Horace's *Ars Poetica* (lines 38–40); see the paraphrase at *DVE* 2.4.4:

> First of all we say that each should suit the weight of the subject matter to his own shoulders, lest if he take on too heavy a load he fall into the mud: this is the advice of our master Horace when at the beginning of *Ars poetica* he says: *Sumite materiam* [Take up a matter].

(cf. also *Conv*. 2.13.10, *Ep*. 13.30, and *Purg*. 21.91–93 and note).

65. and the mortal shoulder that has taken it on: Commentators have seen a pun here on the word for shoulder (*òmero*) and the name of Homer (Omèro).

67–69. It is no voyage . . . who spares himself: There is a reiteration here of the implied comparison of the poem to the Argo (see 2.1–3, 13–15). The unsparing helmsman evokes Palinurus, Aeneas's loyal but ill-fated steersman (*Aen*. 6.340–83); see *Purg*. 6.28–48 and note, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 4.

70–111. Why does my face . . . the name of Mary resound: At the canto's midpoint, Beatrice recalls the pilgrim's attention to the spectacle of Christ, Mary, and their retinue of saints (70–75), now tempered to his vision (76–87), and culminates with a representation of the Annunciation (88–111), which made reaching Heaven possible. The order of events is reversed: the triumphal procession of all the blessed (16–21) precedes the allusion to Christ's opening of

the way to Heaven (37–39); though first in causal sequence, the Annunciation is mentioned last (88–111). As the "morning rising" [*aurora consurgens*, Canticle of Canticles 6.9] the Virgin complements the dawn imagery that begins the canto (in the same passage she is "fair as the moon, bright as the sun," resonating with lines 25–30).

70–75. Why does my face . . . the good path: In Beatrice's figurative language, the solar Christ shines over a garden (cf. Canticle of Canticles 5.1) resplendent with the rose, Mary, and lilies, the martyrs, whose good example ("perfume") drew others to the right path (see note above, to lines 67–69). Both flowers liturgically describe Mary, after Canticle of Canticles 2.1 ("the flower of the field, the lily of the valley") and Ecclus. 24.18 ("I was exalted . . . as a rose plant in Jericho"). The rose anticipates the Empyrean; see 31.1–3 and note. The white and red of lilies and roses are also traditional colors for the assembly of saints, including virgins, confessors, etc., who receive the souls of those who die in grace. The cult of Mary also helps explain the pairing of roses and lilies in vernacular lyric, as in the opening lines of Guinizelli's sonnet "Io voglio del ver la mia donna laudare" [I wish to praise my lady in truth], where he would compare his lady to the rose and the lily (line 2: "asembrarli la rosa e lo giglio").

73–74. There is the rose . . . was made flesh: See John 1.14, the most explicit mention of the Incarnation in the Gospels: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father)." See also note to lines 133–36.

75. perfume: See 2 Cor. 2.15: "We are the good odor of Christ unto God."

78. the battle of the weak eyelids: Dante focuses on the eyelid as what veils and protects the eye (metaphorically its "roof" or "eave"; see also 30.88 and note)—relevant here where his vision will be tempered and strengthened (see line 81).

79–87. As by a ray . . . enough to sustain you: The pilgrim sees Christ reflected in his saints (the flowery meadow lit by sunbeams), while the source, too bright to gaze at directly, is veiled. This suggests how a hidden God is known through his creatures, his reflected "splendor" (see 1.2–3, 13.52–87, 29.13–48 and notes; cf. Rom. 1.20). The metaphor of the field is traditional (see 30.62–63 and note), but when Christ comes in judgment (his second Advent), he comes in a cloud: see Luke 21.27 (the Gospel reading for the second Sunday in Advent): "And then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with great power and majesty"; see also Apoc. 14.14–15.

88–111. The name of the lovely flower . . . the name of Mary resound: In eight terzinas, beginning and ending with her name, Dante unfolds a pageant of Mary attended by an unnamed angel (it is Gabriel): the anticipation of her return with her Son to Heaven (106–8) thus concludes the main action of the canto. The two principal Marian feasts, the Annunciation (March 25) and the Assumption (August 15), are evoked along with Christ's Ascension in lines 103–8 and 118–21, respectively.

Of nine mentions of Mary in this canto, five occur in this section, beginning with the pilgrim's devotional calling on her as flower (line 88, echoing "rose" at 73), and culminating with her proper name, called out by all the blessed (line 111), which is prepared by the metaphorical "living star" (line 92) and "sapphire" (line 101), and the title "Lady of Heaven" that Gabriel confers (line 106). Her proper name recurs in lines 126 and 137 (*Maria*), and her regal title appears when *Regina coeli* is sung (128). See also 32.106–14 and notes.

88–89. The name of the lovely flower . . . morning and evening: A probable reference to the Ave Maria: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" [*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui*]. The Ave Maria was conspicuous in Marian liturgies (at the feasts of the Annunciation and the Purification, for example, and in her Office). By Dante's time this prayer (additional verses became standard only later) was recommended as one of the four that all the faithful should know; the others were Ps. 50 (the *Miserere*, see *Inf.* 1.65, *Purg.* 5.24, *Par.* 14.88–90 and notes; also 32.11–12), the Nicene Creed (see 24.139–44 and note), and the *Paternoster* (Lord's Prayer; see *Purg.* 11.1–24, 26.127–132 and notes); hence Dante's reference to his devotional use here. See also 3.122 and note. The reference to Mary's womb informs lines 103–5.

92–93. the living star . . . as it did down here: Mary wins on earth because she is "blessed . . . among women" in giving birth to Christ, and in Heaven because "she vanquishes harsh judgment there on high" (*Inf.* 2.94–96); see 20.94–99, and note to 99. "Living star" refers to Mary as "star of the sea" [*stella maris*], prayed to by sailors (see *Par.* 2.8–9, *Inf.* 22.12 and notes).

94–96. from within Heaven . . . revolved about her: Gabriel as a "torch" and as "angelic love," recalls the figure of Amor in vernacular courtly literature. Five words in this terzina suggest circling: "circle," "crown," "girded," "revolved," and "around"; see also instances in lines 95 to 119, and see note to lines 103–11. For love correlated with circling, see 1.73–78, *Inf.* 1.39–40, and the last line of the poem, and see Additional Notes 3 and 13.

97–102. Whatever melody down here . . . is ensapphired: Dazzling figurative language accompanies Mary. Comparison of Gabriel's revolutions around Mary to "sweetest" melody (see *Purg.* 2.112–17 and notes) with mention of the beauty of the heavens continues the cosmological analogy: Gabriel's celestial praise of Mary is like the music of the spheres (cf. Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* 5.1.58–65); see Additional Note 8.

101–2. that crowned the beautiful sapphire . . . is ensapphired: Sapphire is one of the stones of the breastplate of the Jewish high priest (Ex. 28.18, 39.11) and of the foundations of the New Jerusalem (Apoc. 21.19), but its significance here derives from the association of Mary with the ultramarine blue mantle she wears in medieval book illuminations; this costly pigment was made from lapis lazuli, confused with sapphire in the Middle Ages. As a sapphire, Mary adorns the heavens; Dante's coinage "ensapphired" (see 4.28, with note) means that in a sense she *is* the sheltering heaven (see *Purg.* 1.13 and note).

103–11. I am angelic love . . . the name of Mary resound: Like antiphonal psalmody, where a soloist intones a verse of the antiphon followed by a psalm verse sung by the choir, the three terzinas that conclude the pageant register Gabriel's song and the response of the saints, which is to sing *Maria*; the beginning of each terzina marks the angel and his song as circling her (lines 103, 106, 109). This Annunciation reenactment digests into a single image the inspiration of Mary's womb by the Holy Spirit and the cooperation of the angelic orders (who move the celestial spheres) in the Incarnation. Christ's birth occurred at a time of universal peace, prepared by Providence, and favored by the heavens (see the notes to 6.34–96 and 545–57; *VN* 29.2; *Conv.* 4.5.3–6; *Mon.* 1.16.1–2, 2.6, 2.11.6–7; *Ep.* 5.26); and see *Purg.* 22.70–72 and note; also *Conv.* 4.21.4–10 and Additional Note 2.

104–5. the deep joy that breathes . . . that sheltered our Desire: Mary's womb is discussed at *Conv.* 4.5.5 as the dwelling that would receive the King of Heaven [*l'albergo, dove il celestiale rege intrare dovea*]; see also *Purg.* 26.137–38 and note, and *Inter cantica* there. The entry of the King of Heaven into Mary's womb is a topic of Advent and Nativity liturgy. Praise of Mary for having borne Christ returns in Dante's Empyrean rose (see 31.1–3 and note).

112–39. The royal mantle . . . keys to such glory: In the canto's final tribute to Mary, the *primum mobile* is indicated as the direction toward which Christ and Mary ascend, while the hosts of the blessed incline toward her in desire but remain to sing a Marian antiphon and represent the Church Triumphant—the army of Peter, custodian of the keys of Heaven. Two avenues of grace are

implied—through the intercession of Mary and through the sacraments of the Church.

112–17. The royal mantle . . . did not yet appear: This refers to the "first moving" heaven, guided by the highest angels, the Seraphim (see 4.28–36, 28.98–105 and notes); it moves most swiftly because it is closest to its goal—the Empyrean, the sphere of intelligible light that is the "place" of the whole cosmos (see 1.2–3, 27.106–11 and notes). The proximity to the Empyrean of the *primum mobile* means it receives the divine breath (the Holy Spirit) directly (later it is seen reflecting the divine ray; see 30.100–108 and note). Compare the "breath of God" on the shell of the cosmos with the "joy that breathes from the womb," i.e., that of the Virgin Mary, in line 104.

112. The royal mantle of all the world's turnings: Dante's word for "turnings" [*volumi*] also suggests a scroll, which can be rolled up; the images of a scroll and of a mantle are superimposed. In the Bible the heavens are represented by both the scroll and the tent of skins (see Is. 34.4, "The heavens shall be folded together as a book" [*et complicabuntur sicut liber caeli*]; Ps. 103.2, "Who stretchest out the heavens like a tent [*sicut pellem*]); both will be folded or rolled up at the Last Judgement; and Apoc. 6.14, "And the heaven departed as a book rolled up [*sicut liber involutus*]). Augustine compared the firmament to the Word of God stretched out above the earth to inform mankind (*Confessions* 13.15; see Additional Note 13). Dante's sphere of fixed stars (cantos 22–27), which includes the examination of the pilgrim in light of the authority of Scripture and the Church, develops this cluster of images (cf. 25.70–78, 100–102; 26.17, 43 and notes).

115–17. had its internal shores . . . did not yet appear: Invisible from earth, the *primum mobile* is homogenous and has a single movement; its unitary influence is diversified and distributed by the multiplicity of lights in the sphere of fixed stars (see 2.64–66, 70–72 and notes). The image of a shore implies the image of the heavens as a great sea or ocean (cf. 1.112, 19.58–63 and notes); the pilgrim is approaching the "horizon" of time and eternity.

118–20. thus my eyes . . . raised itself after its seed: "Its seed" suggests Christ's human descent from the seed of David, Mary's ancestor (cf. *Conv*. 4.5.5–6). Mary disappears by wrapping herself in her "mantle."

121–26. And like a little child . . . was visible to me: In a return to the idea that informs lines 1–9, the blessed are like babies, satisfied at the breast, who show their desire to ascend after Mary by stretching out their arms in grati-

tude and renewed longing; they act out the human tendency to return to the source of love and nourishment. That the souls are fires means that rising is their natural tendency; see *Par*. 1.127–41 and notes.

121. And like a little child . . . toward its mamma: Dante's *fantolin* is one newly capable of speech, whose first word is *mamma*, one of the words suitable for small children (*puerilia*, *DVE* 2.7.4). Compare Ps. 8.3 (cited in *Conv*. 4.19.7): "From the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise."

127–29. Then they remained . . . has never left me: The hymn is the Marian compline antiphon in the Easter season (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 5): its *Alleluias* express joy at the Resurrection implied here, as at lines 37–39.

130–39. O how great . . . keys to such glory: In the final part of the pageant, Dante celebrates the triumph of Peter, the custodian of Heaven, still attended by the harvest of the spheres (lines 19–21)—all the redeemed. Contrast the wealth of the saved and the poverty of the damned, "the two colleges" at 19.110–11 and note, and see note to line 138.

130–32. O how great . . . sowing down here: The "rich arks" are the apostles and disciples, whose works on earth as "good plowmen" sowing and cultivating the seed of Christ's teaching (see Matt. 13.3–9, and cf. *Inf*. 13.97–100 and note) has returned them a hundredfold in Heaven (Matt. 13.8; Gal. 6.8: "For what thing a man shall sow, those also shall he reap").

Latinisms like *ubertà*, from Lat. *ubertas* [abundance]; and *soffolce* [stored], derived from Lat. *fulcire* [to sustain or hold up], add an element of excess and luxury (cf. Canticle of Canticles 2.5, "Stay me up with flowers" [*fulcite me floribus*]).

133–35. There they live . . . was left behind: The exile of Israel in Babylon after the destruction of Jerusalem (see *Purg*. 23.28–30 and notes), but, allegorically, that of fallen man during his exclusion from Eden, has, for those who resisted cupidity, kept faith, and mourned the loss of Eden, yielded the joy stored in the treasure-chests of Heaven (cf. Matt. 19.21); that is, partly within the blessed themselves. The meaning of the passage is intensely compressed.

134–35. weeping in the exile of Babylon: Ps. 136.1–2: "Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept: when we remembered Zion," as recited during Holy Week, associates the desolation of Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity to the Church bereft of Christ (see *Purg*. 7.107–8, 19.50–51 and notes;

Ep. 7.8, citing this psalm; and Martinez 1997). For Babylon as a figure of this world, see Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 16.4–5.

136–39. There triumphs . . . keys to such glory: Peter's control of the keys after Christ's departure keeps open the ways that Christ first blazed (see lines 37–39). See 32.118–26, *Purg.* 9.117–27 and notes. The triumphs have come in descending order of rank: first Christ, then Mary, now Peter; next to be celebrated is Beatrice (24.19–24); later, the pilgrim himself (24.151–54); see next note.

136. There: This word is our rendering of Italian *quivi*, which is also in initial position at lines 37, 73, and 133, a pattern that attests to the unitary action of the canto (see note to lines 1–139). "There" first denotes the single light of Christ, then expands to include the "garden" of Mary and the elect illuminated by Christ, and finally signifies the whole sphere where Peter and the Church triumph. Its meaning also dilates in time: first associated with Christ's Resurrection, then with his nativity, it finally points to all salvation history, from the exile of Babylon to the two "consistories" (to be seen more directly in the Empyrean).

138. the old and the new consistory: Compare Adam at 26.120, "I yearned for this assembly" [*concilio*]. Virgil refers at *Purg.* 21.16 to Heaven as the "blessed council" [*concilio*]; contrast *Inf.* 23.122, of the Sanhedrin, "the council [*concilio*] that sowed so ill for the Jews."

CANTO 24

"O sodalizio eletto a la gran cena
del benedetto Agnello, il qual vi ciba
sì che la vostra voglia è sempre piena,
se per grazia di Dio questi preliba
di quel che cade de la vostra mensa,
prima che morte tempo li prescriba,
ponete mente a l'affezione immensa
e roratelo alquanto: voi bevete
sempre del fonte onde vien quel ch' ei pensa."
Così Beatrice, e quelle anime liete
si fero spere sopra fissi poli,
fiammando, volte, a guisa di comete.
E come cerchi in tempra d'orïuoli
si giran sì che 'l primo, a chi pon mente,
quïeto pare e l'ultimo che voli:
così quelle carole, differente-
mente danzando, de la sua richezza
mi facieno stimar, veloci e lente.
Di quella ch' io notai di più carezza
vid' ïo uscire un foco sì felice
che nullo vi lasciò di più chiarezza,
e tre fiate intorno di Beatrice
si volse con un canto tanto divo
che la mia fantasia nol mi ridice.
Però salta la penna e non lo scrivo,
ché l'imagine nostra a cotal pieghe,
non che 'l parlare, è troppo color vivo.
"O santa suora mia, che sì ne prieghe
divota, per lo tuo ardente affetto
da quella bella spera mi disleghe."

CANTO 24

Fixed stars, continued: saint Peter—examination of the pilgrim: faith—definition—reasons for faith—form of the pilgrim's faith

"O company elect of the great feast of the blessed Lamb, who feeds you so well that your desire is always filled,
if through God's grace this man has a foretaste of what falls from your table before death assigns his time,
consider his immense yearning and bedew him somewhat: you drink always from the fountain whence comes his thought."
So Beatrice, and those happy souls became spheres spinning on fixed poles, flaming, as they turned, like comets.
And as the wheels in the mechanism of a clock turn so that, to one who watches, the first seems to be motionless and the last to fly:
so those carols, differently dancing, allowed me to judge their richness, being fast and slow.
From the carol I thought the most loving I saw a flame come forth, so happy that none it left behind there had more brightness,
and three times it circled Beatrice with a song so divine that my imagination cannot tell it back to me.
Therefore my pen leaps over and I do not write it, for our imagining has colors too unsubtle for such folds, let alone our speech.
"O my holy sister, who beg us so devoutly, your ardent love has unbound me from that lovely sphere."

Poscia fermato, il foco benedetto
a la mia donna dirizzò lo spiro,
che favellò così com' i' ho detto.
Ed ella: "O luce etterna del gran viro
a cui nostro Segnor lasciò le chiavi,
ch' ei portò giù, di questo gaudio miro,
tenta costui di punti lievi e gravi,
come ti piace, intorno de la fede,
per la qual tu su per lo mare andavi.
S' elli ama bene e bene spera e crede,
non t'è occulto, perché 'l viso hai quivi
dov' ogne cosa dipinta si vede,
ma perché questo regno ha fatto civi
per la verace fede, a glorïarla
di lei parlare è ben ch' a lui arrivi."
Sì come il bacciallier s'arma e non parla
fin che 'l maestro la question propone,
per approvarla, non per terminarla:
così m'armava io d'ogne ragione
mentre ch' ella dicea, per esser presto
a tal querente e a tal professione.
"Di, buon cristiano, fatti manifesto:
fede che è?" Ond' io levai la fronte
in quella luce onde spirava questo;
poi mi volsi a Beatrice, ed essa pronte
sembianze femmi perch' ïo spandessi
l'acqua di fuor del mio interno fonte.
"La Grazia che mi dà ch' io mi confessi,"
comincia' io: "da l'alto primipilo
faccia li miei concetti bene espressi."
E seguitai: "Come 'l verace stilo
ne scrisse, padre, del tuo caro frate
che mise teco Roma nel buon filo,
fede è sustanza di cose sperate
e argomento de le non parventi,
e questa pare a me sua quiditate."
Allora udi': "Dirittamente senti,
se bene intendi perché la ripuose
tra le sustanze e poi tra li argomenti."

Having come to rest, the blessed flame
directed its breathing to my lady, speaking as I
have said.
And she: "O eternal light of the great hero with
whom our Lord left the keys, brought down with
him, to this wondrous rejoicing,
try this man with easy and difficult points, as it
pleases you, about faith, by which you walked on
the surface of the sea.
Whether he truly loves and truly hopes and
believes is not hidden from you, for your gaze
goes where each thing is seen depicted,
but because this kingdom makes its citizens
by means of the true faith, in order to glorify it, it
will be well for him to have occasion to speak of it."
As the bachelor arms himself but does not
speak until the master proposes the question,
and then to analyze, not to determine it:
so I armed myself with all reasons while she
was speaking, to be ready for such a questioner
and such a profession.
"Speak, good Christian, manifest yourself:
what is faith?" At which I raised my brow toward
the light whence this breathed forth;
then I turned to Beatrice, and with her ready
glance she encouraged me to pour forth the
water from my inward fountain.
"May the Grace that allows me to confess
myself," I began, "before the high commander,
cause my concepts to be well expressed."
And I continued: "As the truthful stylus has
written for us, father, of your dear brother, who
with you set Rome on the right path,
faith is the substance of things hoped for and
argument of those that do not appear, and this
seems to me its quiddity."
Then I heard: "You judge correctly, if you
understand why he placed it among the
substances and then among the arguments."

E io appresso: "Le profonde cose
che mi largiscon qui le lor parvenza
a li occhi di là giù son sì ascose
che l'esser loro v'è in sola credenza,
sopra la qual si fonda l'alta spene,
e però di sustanza prende intenza.
E da questa credenza ci convene
silogizzar sanz' avere altra vista;
però intenza d'argomento tene."
Allora udi': "Se quantunque s'acquista
giù per dottrina fosse così 'nteso,
non li avria loco ingegno di sofista."
Così spirò di quello amore acceso;
indi soggiunse: "Assai bene è trascorsa
d'esta moneta già la lega e 'l peso,
ma dimmi se tu l'hai ne la tua borsa."
Ond' io: "Sì ho, sì lucida e sì tonda
che del suo conio nulla mi s'inforsa."
Appresso uscì de la luce profonda
che lì splendeva: "Questa cara gioia,
sopra la qual ogne virtù si fonda,
onde ti venne?" E io: "La larga ploia
de lo Spirito Santo ch' è diffusa
in su le vecchie e le nove cuoia
è silogismo che la m'ha conchiusa
acutamente sì che 'nverso d'ella
ogne dimostrazion mi pare ottusa."
Io udi' poi: "L'antica e la novella
proposizion che così ti conchiude,
perché l'hai tu per divina favella?"
E io: "La prova che 'l ver mi dischiude
son l'opere seguite, a che Natura
non scalda ferro mai né batte incude."
Risposto fummi: "Dì, chi t'assicura
che quell'opere fosser? Quel medesmo
che vuol provarsi, non altri, il ti giura."
"Se 'l mondo si rivolse al cristianesimo,"
diss' io, "sanza miracoli, quest' uno
è tal che li altri non sono il centesmo:

And I next: "The deep things that grant themselves to my apprehension here, are so hidden from our eyes down there

that their being is in belief alone, upon which our high hope is founded, and therefore faith can be called a substance.

And from our belief it is necessary to syllogize without seeing more: therefore faith is a kind of argument."

Then I heard: "If all that is acquired down there as doctrine were understood so well, no sophist's wit would find a place."

This breathed forth from that burning love; then he added: "We have gone over the alloy and the weight of this coin well,

but tell me if you have it in your purse." And I: "Indeed I do, so shining and so round that none puts me in doubt of its minting."

Then there came forth from the deep light that was shining there: "This precious jewel on which every other virtue is founded,

whence did it come to you?" and I: "The plentiful rain of the Holy Spirit, poured out on both the old and the new skins,

is a syllogism that has concluded it for me so sharply that next to it every demonstration seems dulled."

I heard then: "The old and the new propositions on which you base your conclusion, why do you hold them to be the speech of God?"

And I: "The proof that discloses the truth to me is the resultant works, for which Nature never heats the iron nor pounds the anvil."

I was answered: "Tell who assures you that those works took place? The very book you wish to prove, not someone else, swears it to you."

"If the world turned to Christianity," said I, "without miracles, this one miracle is such that the others are not a hundredth of it:

ché tu intrasti povero e digiuno
in campo a seminar la buona pianta
che fu già vite e ora è fatta pruna."
Finito questo, l'alta corte santa
risonò per le spere un "Dio laudamo"
ne la melode che là sù si canta.
E quel baron che sì di ramo in ramo,
essaminando, già tratto m'avea
che a l'ultime fronde appressavamo,
ricominciò: "La grazia che donnea
con la tua mente la bocca t'aperse
infino a qui come aprir si dovea,
sì ch' io approvo ciò che fuori emerse,
ma or convien espremer quel che credi
e onde a la credenza tua s'offerse."
"O santo padre e spirito che vedi
ciò che credesti sì che tu vincesti
ver' lo sepulcro più giovani piedi,"
comincia' io: "tu vuo' ch' io manifesti
la forma qui del pronto creder mio,
e anche la cagion di lui chiedesti.
E io rispondo: Io credo in uno Dio
solo ed etterno, che tutto 'l ciel move,
non moto, con amore e con disio,
e a tal creder non ho io pur prove
fisice e metafisice, ma dalmi
anche la verità che quinci piove
per Moïsè, per profeti e per salmi,
per l'Evangelio e per voi che scriveste
poi che l'ardente Spirito vi fé almi.
E credo in tre Persone etterne, e queste
credo una essenza sì una e sì trina
che soffera congiunto *sono* ed *este*.
De la profonda condizion divina
ch' io tocco mo, la mente mi sigilla
più volte l'evangelica dottrina.
Quest' è 'l principio, quest' è la favilla
che si dilata in fiamma poi vivace
e come stella in cielo in me scintilla."

for you came into the field poor and hungry to
sow the good plant, formerly a vine but now become a
thornbush."
When I had said this, the high and holy court
resounded through the spheres with a "Praise we
God" in the melody that is sung up there.
And that baron who, examining me, had led
me from branch to branch so that we were
drawing near the last leaves,
began again: "The grace that woos your mind has
opened your mouth until now as it should be opened,
so that I approve what has emerged, but now
you must express what you believe, and how it
was offered to your belief."
"O holy father and spirit who see now what you
believed so firmly that you vanquished younger
feet toward the tomb,"
I began, "you wish me to make manifest here
the form of my ready belief, and you have
inquired also as to its cause.
And I reply: I believe in one God, sole and
eternal, who moves all the heavens, unmoved,
with love and with desire,
and for this belief I have not only proofs
physical and metaphysical, but that provided me
by the truth that rains down from here
through Moses, through prophets, and through
psalms, through the Gospel and through all of
you, who wrote when the burning Spirit
made you nourishers.
And I believe in three Persons eternal, and
these I believe to be an Essence so one and so
trine that it supports both *are* and *is*.
About the profound nature of God on which I
touch now, my mind is sealed numerous times by
the teachings of the Gospels.
This is the origin, this is the spark that
expands then into a lively flame and like a star in
the sky flashes within me."

Come 'l segnor ch'ascolta quel che i piace
da indi abbraccia il servo, gratulando
per la novella, tosto ch' el si tace:
così, benedicendomi cantando,
tre volte cinse me, sì com' io tacqui,
l'appostolico lume al cui comando
io avea detto, sì nel dir li piacqui!

148 Like the lord who listens to what pleases him
and then embraces his servant, thanking him for
the news, as soon as he is silent:
151 so, blessing me in his song when I fell silent, three
times the apostolic light encircled me at whose command
154 I had spoken, so greatly in my speech I
pleased him!

NOTES

1–9. O company elect . . . comes his thought: According to Canto 23, it is in the presence of the two "armies of Christ's triumph," "all the fruit harvested" (23.19–21), i.e., all the myriad souls of the Church Triumphant, saved both before and after the Incarnation of Christ, that Beatrice asks saint Peter to share with the pilgrim some of what he drinks from the eternal fountain; the terminology draws on both the idea of God's grace as like dew or rain (line 8; see lines 91–96, with notes) and the waters of eternal life of John 4.5–15 (line 9; cf. *Purg.* 21.1–3, with note).

1–6. O company elect . . . assigns his time: The wedding feast of the Lamb (Christ), one of the most frequent figures of Heaven, often represented in the visual arts, is based on Apoc. 19.6–9:

> And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude . . . saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come . . . And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

(Cf. also Jesus' parables, e.g., Matt. 22.2–14, Luke 14.7–11). Dante's symbol of the banquet at which the bread of the angels is served, the governing metaphor of the *Convivio* (1.1.7–15, etc.), derives from this tradition: the knowledge of philosophical truth in this life is a figure of the heavenly banquet, the Beatific Vision.

1. sodalizio eletto: *Sodalizio* [company] is from classical Lat. *sodalicium* [a group meeting periodically for religious or political purposes], part of the hieratic elevation of vocabulary; *elect* is part of the same vocabulary, referring to God's inscrutable predestination to beatitude.

2–3. who feeds you . . . is always filled: Note the parallel with 2.11–12: "The bread of the angels, which one lives on here, though never sated by it," also a reference to the opening of the *Convivio*.

4–5. if . . . this man has a foretaste of what falls from your table: The same image as in *Conv.* 1.1.10: "E io adunque, che non seggio a la beata mensa, ma, fuggito da la pastura del volgo, a' piedi di coloro che seggiono ricolgo di quello che da loro cade" [And I therefore, who do not sit at the blessed table, but, having fled

from the food of the vulgar herd, at the feet of those who do sit there gather from what falls from them] (which he will then mercifully serve to the unlearned). Note the clear implication (insisted on many times in the *Comedy*, and especially here in the sphere of fixed stars and above), that the pilgrim's salvation is assured.

10–18. So Beatrice . . . being fast and slow: Beatrice's request causes great rejoicing among the throng (but the idea of thousands of souls, strongly operative in 23.19–21, 29–31, and 82–84, seems left behind in the interest of closer focus).

10–12. and those happy souls . . . turned, like comets: The term *spere* [literally, "spheres"] is used here to mean "circles" (as below, in line 30). Joy is manifested by the whirling of the souls, in addition to their brightness; the similarity to comets (implying the trailing of cometlike tails, the only possible reference) would be inconsistent with a stationary spinning of the individual souls.

13–18. And as the wheels . . . being fast and slow: In the first clock simile (10.139–48), the image was applied to a single circle, and while the difference in pushing as opposed to pulling was mentioned, the differences in speed of revolution in clocks were not. Here a very large degree of difference of speed is invoked, and, as previously, brightness and speed are indications of degrees of beatitude (see Ageno 1982).

16–18. so those carols . . . being fast and slow: Now a whole series of round dances is imagined, recalling those in Cantos 10–14 (which, however, turned synchronously). There is no mention of these being concentric. Although the derivation of *carol*, as of It. *carola*, is disputed, Dante obviously associates it with Lat. *corolla* [small crown], one of the most probable suggested origins of the term (cf. the note to 8.138–39).

16–17. differente-mente: Dante's splitting of the adverb between the two lines of verse calls attention to the original formation of adverbs in Vulgar Latin and surviving in all the Romance languages: it consisted of the noun *mens* [mind; in the ablative case, *mente*] modified by an adjective; thus Dante's phrase is formed on the model of "with different mind," and suggests an allusion to the primacy of intellectual vision in determining degrees of beatitude.

19–27. From the carol . . . let alone our speech: The soul that now comes forward is the most blessed from the most joyous of all the round dances; it circles Beatrice three times (note the parallel with the conclusion of the canto, lines 151–54), singing a melody so beautiful it transcends the power of the pilgrim's memory to recall it.

25–27. Therefore my pen . . . let alone our speech: Another inexpressibility topos, with a remarkable allusion to the new style of painting (Dante almost certainly has Giotto in mind here), whose techniques of mixing colors allowed unprecedented subtlety in the depiction of flesh and clothes (hence the "folds" [*pieghe*]) with a delicacy of nuance that is indescribable in words; the soul's song transcends our imagination (this would not be true of the shades of color in painting, or we could not perceive them).

28–30. O my holy sister . . . that lovely sphere: See the note to lines 10–12.

32. its breathing: Dante's *spiro* [breath, spirit] is a pseudo-Latinism, a back formation from the verb *spirare* [to breathe].

34–36. And she: O eternal . . . this wondrous rejoicing: Beatrice first identifies this soul: it is saint Peter, whose receiving of the "keys of the kingdom of Heaven" from Christ (Matt. 16.19) was regarded by the Roman Church as his appointment as the first pope (cf. *Purg.* 19.97–99, with note); Dante uses *viro* (from Lat. *vir* [man, as distinct from woman]; it is the root of the term *virtus* [valor]) for its solemn tone; it appears three times in the *Comedy* (*Inf.* 4.30, *Par.* 10.132, and here).

37–45. try this man . . . to speak of it: Beatrice asks saint Peter to test the pilgrim on faith. Peter had such faith that when he saw Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee he asked to come to him, and given permission, walked on the water; but he grew afraid of the stormy waves and began to sink, whereupon Jesus saved him but reproached him affectionately as "of little faith" (Matt. 22–33).

40–45. Whether he truly loves . . . to speak of it: In giving Beatrice this speech, Dante more or less acknowledges the paradox of an interrogation on faith when (a) the pilgrim's entire journey is an expression of his faith, and (b) he has just seen Christ, the Virgin Mary, and their triumph, and he is in the presence of the chief of the Apostles: he is in the realm of certainty, of fulfillment of faith (cf. lines 70–78, with note, and Augustine, *Enchiridion de fide, spe et charitate* 8, on faith always being in the unseen; this view was taken over in the *Liber sententiarum*). Beatrice resolves the paradox by directing attention away from it, to (a) the assurance of the pilgrim's salvation (lines 40–42), and (b) the supposed usefulness of "public" glorification of the virtue by which Heaven is earned (lines 43–45; cf. Rom. 3.21–31).

40–42. Whether he truly loves . . . is seen depicted: Saint Peter sees all things in God, thus he knows whether the pilgrim possesses the three

theological virtues (note that Beatrice mentions them in reverse order—of both the classic passage, 1 Cor. 13.13: "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three," and of the sequence of the examinations—a chiastic relation). The obvious implication is that the pilgrim does possess them and that—in his dream, at least—his salvation is assured. As will become clear at the beginning of Canto 25, these lines presage an examination on all three theological virtues; the three Apostles who typify them and who examine the pilgrim (Peter, James, and John) are also the only ones of the original twelve whose epistles are included in the New Testament.

43–45. but because this kingdom . . . to speak of it: The reason that Beatrice offers is a mere official and ceremonial one, whose logic, furthermore, is anything but clear. The basic (and real) reason for the pilgrim's profession of faith is the fact that the poem is a fiction and in the real situation (the poet is a man on earth imagining Heaven and testifying before the living) a formal (and technically correct) profession of faith is both meaningful and appropriate.

46–154. As the bachelor . . . I pleased him: The examination of the pilgrim on faith, in five parts: (a) the definition of faith (lines 52–66); (b) explanation of the key terms of the definition (lines 67–81); (c) the pilgrim's possession of faith (lines 82–87); (d) the rational ground of the pilgrim's faith (lines 88–114); and (e) the specific "form" of his faith and its source (lines 118–54). Each part is concluded with the expressed approval of saint Peter, and in one case (part d) of all present as well.

46–51. As the bachelor . . . such a profession: As part a begins, Dante invokes the circumstances of a university oral (and public) examination, one in which the possessor of the bachelor's degree qualifies for the master's degree (which will license him to teach: Lat. *magister* means "teacher"); the bachelor would not yet have the authority to "determine" (make a ruling settling the question), the prerogative of a "doctor" but must show his worth in analyzing it (see Glorieux 1933).

52–53. Speak, good Christian . . . what is faith: Part a of the examination: first the formal definition of faith.

53–57. At which I raised . . . my inward fountain: Lines 53–54 suggest that the pilgrim has not yet looked directly at saint Peter. Even after doing so, he turns to Beatrice for instructions. On the implications of lines 56–57, see the note to lines 85–87.

58–66. May the Grace . . . its quiddity: The pilgrim's reply to the first question, preceded by the invocation of God's grace.

58–59. May the Grace . . . before the high commander: God's grace has accompanied the pilgrim on his entire journey, of course, but it is a special favor to encounter the chief of the Apostles. "The high commander" is our translation of "l'alto primipilo" [the high standard bearer]—the *primipilus* was the centurion leading the column in the Roman army (Benvenuto).

61–66. As the truthful . . . its quiddity: Preceded by the identification of its author (according to tradition, saint Paul; the biblical text gives no indication of authorship, and there is no reference to the characteristic doctrines of the Epistle in the saint's other writings; modern opinion does not regard him as the author), the pilgrim quotes Heb. 11.1.

61–63. As the truthful . . . on the right path: Saint Paul, traditionally called "the Apostle" par excellence, because of his impressive systematizing of the faith, frequently claimed the authority of an Apostle, implicitly equal to saint Peter (especially as "Apostle to the Gentiles"), although explicitly calling himself the "least of the Apostles" (1 Cor. 15.9; cf. Rom. 11.11, 1 Cor. 9.1, and many other passages). Both he and saint Peter were martyred in Rome; Acts 28.11–30 relates saint Paul's two years of unmolested preaching there. As the commentators point out, line 62 echoes 2 Peter 3.15: "as also our most dear brother Paul has written to you according to the wisdom granted him."

64–65. faith is the substance . . . do not appear: A literal translation of Heb. 11.1: "Est autem fides sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium" (most discussions do not account for the gerundive *sperandarum* [for which we must hope]).

66. its quiddity: Literally "its whatness"; the scholastic term was used primarily of composites (substances consisting of both form and matter, the latter considered to be the *principium individuationis* [principle of individuation]) as a definition indicating its nature as an individual thing; here Dante uses it to mean "definition" (see *ED* s.v. "Quiditate"); the categories of form and matter in relation to faith recur in lines 82–87 and 124–29.

67–69. You judge correctly . . . among the arguments: Part b: saint Peter requires an exposition of the terms of the definition. The Greek text has *hypóstasis* and *élegxos*, correctly translated in the Vulgate as *substantia* and *argumentum*, respectively, terms laden with Aristotelian and Plotinian

connotations; as was well known to readers of saint Augustine, the *vetus latina* gave *convictio* [conviction] instead of *substantia*.

70–78. The deep things . . . kind of argument: The pilgrim's answer, first explaining "substance" (lines 70–75), then "argument" (lines 76–78).

70–72. The deep things . . . our eyes down there: These lines acknowledge the paradox mentioned in the note to lines 40–45, distinguishing between those things that are accessible to the human mind on earth and those the pilgrim "apprehends" up here (that *appear* to him; note the ambiguity of the term *apprehension*, which can refer to imaginative/sensory perception or intellectual grasp; see the next note, and the note to lines 43–45.

72. are so hidden from our eyes down there: Note the parallel here and in line 77 with Heb. 11.1: "those [things] that do not *appear*."

73–75. their being is in belief . . . called a substance: The senses give no basis for belief in unseen things; only faith asserts their existence. Therefore "our high hopes" (for the next life) rest on—are supported by—faith, which can therefore be said to "stand beneath" (*sub* [beneath] + *stare* [to stand]).

76–78. And from our belief . . . a kind of argument: The content of our belief is used as a basis of reasoning, of argumentation (*silogizzare* [to construct syllogisms]: the characteristic form of logical thought, according to Aristotle).

Some commentators (e.g., Sapegno) suppose that Dante here gives a simplified version of Aquinas's explanation of the two terms in his article on the definition of faith, an extended commentary on Heb. 11.1 (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 4 a.1). This is not at all the case. Aquinas argues that the first nature in any genus, as long as it virtually contains what is later actualized by form, can be called a *substance*, and that faith receives this name because it is the not yet fully actualized *beginning* ["inchoatio"] of the next life (Heaven) in us and is a gift of grace. Likewise, for *argumentum* Aquinas says that faith "requires the intellect to assent to what is unseen," i.e., that faith persuades the intellect, a view with which Dante's does not conflict but is far from identical to it. To Aquinas, Dante's explanation of *substance* would no doubt have seemed circular, as well as identical with his explanation of *argument*: the persuasion of the intellect (Aquinas's *argument*) is the basis of hope. Dante is taking *substance* to mean *foundation* (in the sense of *assumption*: it is a kind of catachresis) in much the same sense as he takes *argument*; he psychologizes both terms. His saint Peter *is* satisfied, however.

83–85. We have gone over . . . in your purse: The striking metaphor of faith as a kind of coin has important implications, as will appear. In the terms current in Dante's time, a coin contained a certain weight of metal; the florin, to which Dante so often refers, was legally defined as being of pure gold (24 karats); its imprint, on one side the Florentine lily, on the other saint John the Baptist, the city's patron saint, stood for a guarantee of the weight and purity (cf. the notes to *Inf.* 30.73–74 and 76–90). If faith is a kind of coin, its "weight" would correspond to the import of the terms of the definition; the "alloy" would correspond to its doctrinal purity or correctness.

85–87. but tell me . . . doubt of its minting: The "purse" in which Dante treasures his coins of faith would be his heart (on the heart as the seat of faith, see the note to 13.691–96 and Durling 1981b). The pilgrim's answer invokes the criteria by which one might in theory distinguish counterfeit and genuine coins. The "'shining" of the coin is a mark of its being gold; its "roundness" indicates that no profiteer has pared its edges (gold and silver both being soft, this was a common practice); what is striking here is that the pilgrim says that he estimates the genuineness of his faith by what in the coin are externals and in actual coins are notoriously unreliable; he says they do not bring the "minting" of his coin into doubt; the minting would correspond to the authority manufacturing the coin—in the case of the florin, the city of Florence; in the case of the pilgrim's faith, God himself. Thus, just as the public reliance on coinage is an act of reliance on the minting authority, so also the pilgrim—and Dante—must have faith that he has faith: in the last analysis, its existence depends on God. For the same sense of the individual soul as at a midpoint between what is external to the self and what is so deeply internal as to imply an inner as well as an outward boundary, cf. "my inward fountain," line 57: whence does this fountain spring? (On this entire complex of issues, see again Durling 1981a).

88–114. Then there came forth . . . is sung up there: Part d of the examination: the source of his faith (this part overlaps with the second topic of part e; here the general question of faith in the Bible is discussed, there the basis of specific doctrines about the nature of God).

89–91. This precious jewel . . . come to you: The question regards the source of the pilgrim's knowledge of the faith, and more fundamentally, the authority of the Bible.

91–96. The plentiful rain . . . demonstration seems dulled: The "old and new skins" [parchments] are the books of the Old and New Testaments (later referred to also as the "old and new propositions"). The pilgrim refers only to

his *reading* of the Bible, which he says has been a conclusive "syllogism" for him; already used in line 77, this term here probably refers to the figural relation between Old and New Testaments, drawing conclusions from their interconnections as if they were the premises of a syllogism. That their effect has been sharp (that is, distinct and compelling) is probably to be associated with the idea of precision as a mark of actualized belief (see lines 127–28; and cf. *ST* 2a 2ae q. 5 a.3 and q. 6 a. 1).

It is striking and no doubt significant that Dante does not mention preachers or preaching in this context, for in a celebrated passage (Rom. 10.14–17), saint Paul wrote what was taken to mean that the acquisition of faith required hearing the Word from living persons:

> "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved" [Joel 2.32]. How then shall they call on him [in] whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe [in] him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear, without a preacher?... Faith then cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ.

Dante's condemnations of the current corruption of the clergy (27.40–66) and specifically of contemporary preachers (29.85–126) suggest that the omission of preaching here reflects his strongly anti-institutional views; perhaps also it is self-interestedly pro-reading, imagining the individual alone with the text (perhaps even an anticipation of Luther's "sola scriptura" [on the basis of scripture alone], his formula for deciding theological issues).

91–93. the plentiful rain . . . and the new skins: The striking figure of the rain (cf. the note to lines 1–9) over the pages of text leaves out the human authors who are the literal recipients of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The juxtaposition of rain and the dried calfskin of parchments suggests a subterranean association with the miraculously flowering dried rod of the legend of the competition for the hand of the Virgin (Jacobus Voragine, Warner 1976, Elliott 1994, Fassler 2000).

91. rain: Dante's word for rain here is the Provençal *ploia* (cf. 20.62: *plora*[weeps]): in certain contexts Dante prefers to keep the *pl* kept by both French and Provençal, rather than the palatalization *l* of It. *pi-*, as in *piova* or *piange*.

97–102. The old and the new . . . pounds the anvil: Saint Peter next asks why the pilgrim holds the Bible to be the word of God, and the pilgrim cites the miracles it narrates, obviously regarding them as historical fact.

97–99. The old and the new . . . speech of God: Saint Peter accepts the analogy with the syllogism by calling Old and New Testaments "propositions" supporting the pilgrim's conclusion.

100–102. The proof . . . pounds the anvil: Accepting the biblical accounts of miracles, events beyond Nature, which operates by material principles (represented by analogy with metal-working), leads to faith in their being produced by God.

103–5. I was answered: Tell . . . swears it to you: Saint Peter raises the objection that the pilgrim's reasoning begs the question, since he is citing the Bible itself to prove the veracity of the Bible.

106–11. If the world . . . become a thornbush: The pilgrim replies that given the humble beginnings of Christianity, its universal acceptance, if unsupported by miracles, is itself a miracle far surpassing any in the Bible. The circular argument is avoided by the citation of a historical fact recognized by all. The argument was well established in the apologetic tradition (the commentators cite Arnobius, *Adversus nationes* 2.5 (*PL* 5) and *De civ. Dei* 22.5.68–72; cf. 27–33: "And it is incredible that so few men of common origin, weak and uneducated, should so effectively have persuaded the world, and even the learned in it, of such incredible things"; cf. 1 Cor. 1.27–29). Dante was of course aware of the loss of the Middle East, North Africa, and much of Spain to the Muslims (cf. 29.91–92, with note), which Arnobius and Augustine did not foresee; the idea that the whole world has turned to Christianity is in Dante's time already very Eurocentric. Why it is appropriate here for the pilgrim to mention the corruption of the Church ("now become a thornbush") is worth considering.

112–14. When I had said . . . sung up there: The justice of the pilgrim's last statement is validated by all the members of the heavenly court. Presumably what they sing is the ancient hymn "Te Deum laudamus" (text in Raby 1959).

115–54. And that baron . . . I pleased him: The last phase of the examination in faith, concluding with saint Peter's symbolic crowning of the pilgrim by circling his head three times and conferring his blessing (see 25.1–12, with notes). The term *barone* [baron] is part of the system of courtly terminology (in which God is a mighty emperor who maintains a whole courtly social structure) that will become increasingly prominent in this (cf. lines 43, 118, 148–50) and the next cantos.

115–17. had led me from branch . . . near the last leaves: The examination, branching into different topics, has resembled a tree; the "last leaves" are the last topics, but in content as well they represent the ultimate form of the

pilgrim's faith (as the leaves of a tree are the fullest manifestation of its form, its principle of life).

118–21. The grace that woos . . . what has emerged: As in lines 82–83, saint Peter's expressed approval of the pilgrim's reply leads to the next question. Dante's term *donneare* (from the Provençal *domnejar* [to woo a lady in courtly fashion], part of troubador terminology) is perhaps surprising in this context, but deeply expressive in imagining God's grace as wooer of the pilgrim's mind, which gradually opens and flowers in response.

122–23. now you must express . . . offered to your belief: In line 91 saint Peter asked, "Whence did it [faith] come to you?" The difference is that in the first case the question refers to faith *as such*, and here to the specific doctrines of his belief (see the note to lines 127–28).

124–47. O holy father . . . flashes within me: The pilgrim's reply to this last question is more elaborate than his preceding ones. It has three parts, each (except the last) subdivided: (1) introduction a acknowledging saint Peter's preeminence in faith among the apostles (lines 124–26), and (b) defining the scope of his answer (lines 127–29); (2) his belief in God, (a) general: (i) his belief in one God (lines 130–32), (ii) the grounds for this belief (lines 133–38); (b) more specifically: (i) belief in the doctrine of the Trinity (lines 139–41), (ii) the grounds for this belief (lines 142–44); (4) conclusion (lines 145–47).

124–26. O holy father . . . younger feet: The reference is to John 20.3–8 (verse 2 clearly identifies the apostle with Peter as John, whom Jesus loved):

> Peter therefore went out, and that other disciple, and they came to the sepulchre. And they both ran together, and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And when he stooped down, he saw the linen cloths lying; but yet he went not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen cloths lying. And the napkin that had been about his head, not lying with the linen cloths but apart, wrapped up into one place. Then that other disciple also went in, who came first to the sepulchre: and he saw, and believed.

It might seem that Dante misread the biblical text here; but see *Mon.* 3.9.16, roughly contemporaneous with this passage, which summarizes the incident accurately.

127–28. you wish me . . . my ready belief: The pilgrim identifies "what you believe" (line 122) as the actualized *form* of his belief, not, in modern

terminology, its *content*. The form is what determines a thing's nature; in the case of belief, the *matter* that receives this form is both intellect and will, which cooperate in *willing assent*; the *form* is its specific orthodox doctrine. That his faith is "pronto" [ready] means that it contains no hesitations or reservations.

130–44. I believe . . . of the Gospels: The two parts of the pilgrim's statement are both drawn from the Nicene Creed (for its text, see p. 684), recited as part of the Ordinary in every celebration of the Mass.

130–38. I believe . . . made you nourishers: Part 2 of the pilgrim's answer; for the difference between the grounds cited in lines 133–38 and in 142–44, see the note to the latter terzina.

130–32. I believe . . . and with desire: A statement of the first article of the Nicene Creed (omitting the words concerning creation), with the addition of the Aristotelian doctrine of the first cause as the "unmoved mover," unmoved by anything outside it, and completely actualized, therefore unchanging, all change deriving from the love and desire felt for it by the rest of the cosmos (*Metaphysics* 12.7; this doctrine had been adopted, with some reservations, by the Scholastics: see *ST* 1a q. 2 a. 3).

133–38. and for this belief . . . made you nourishers: Two types of proof are mentioned: "physical and metaphysical," i.e., philosophical proofs developed by the natural human power of reason; and biblical.

134. proofs physical and metaphysical: As "physical" proofs Dante probably has in mind Rom. 1.18–20, regularly cited to support the view that God's "eternal power and godhead" are revealed in the cosmos, and as "metaphysical" ones, the countless discussions of Aristotle in the Schools.

135–38. the truth that rains . . . made you nourishers: Recurrence of the rain metaphor of lines 91–93, this time with the finite verb *piove* [rains].

137–38. through the Gospel . . . made you nourishers: The "Gospel" is the "good news" (Old English *gode* + *spell*, from Gr. *eú* [good] + *aggélion* [message]) of salvation, testified to by each of the four *evangelists* [from the same Greek root]). With the Epistles and Apocalypse, all of the New Testament is indicated here.

138. when the burning Spirit made you nourishers: The "burning Spirit" refers to the descent of the Holy Spirit into the Church at Pentecost, in the form of flames on the heads of the assembled disciples (Acts 2; cf. *Inf.* 19.25–

30, with notes, and *Inferno* Additional Note 7). *Almo* (from Lat. *alo*, *alere* [to nourish] refers originally to the breast of a nurse, but was widely used in the extended sense.

139–44. And I believe . . . teachings of the Gospels: Part 2.b.i, a very abbreviated statement of the doctrine of the Trinity, relying mainly on the Nicene Creed, which was developed under Constantine to deal with the widespread heresy of Arius, who had denied the equality of the Son with the Father. The Nicene Creed emphasizes the equality and consubstantiality of the three Persons much more than other early creed texts.

140–41. an Essence so one . . . both *are* and *is*: Brief statement of the chief points in the Creed pertaining to all the Persons of the Trinity: absolute unity (*is*) and equality (*are*) of the Persons, who always act together but have distinct names and, in a sense, attributes: Father omnipotent, Creator, Begetter; Son, Begotten, Logos, Mind; Spirit, Love, Comforter, Fire: paradoxes that, like the hypostatic union of divine and human in Christ, utterly transcend human understanding.

142–44. About the profound . . . teachings of the Gospels: The New Testament is granted considerably greater authority than the Old Testament here, as the fullest and definitive revelation of the triune nature of God.

145–47. This is the origin . . . flashes within me: Part 3, conclusion. The two instances of "this" in line 145 refer to the entire statement of lines 130–44. The fire image may be a reference to the idea that *love*, too, is the form of faith (cf. *ST* 2a 2ae q. 4 a. 3). For the star imagery, cf. 25.70–72 and 13.1–24, with notes.

148–54. Like a lord . . . I pleased him: This symbolic crowning is triple (Trinitarian); the parallel with baptism ("in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit") is recalled and made explicit in 25.1–12 (see our notes).

CANTO 25

Se mai continga che 'l poema sacro, 1
al quale ha posto mano e Cielo e terra
sì che m'ha fatto per più anni macro,
vinca la crudeltà che fuor mi serra 4
del bello ovile ov' io dormi' agnello,
nimico ai lupi che li danno guerra,
con altra voce omai, con altro vello 7
ritornerò poeta, e in sul fonte
del mio battesmo prenderò 'l cappello:
però che ne la fede, che fa conte 10
l'anime a Dio, quivi intra' io, e poi
Pietro per lei sì mi girò la fronte.
Indi si mosse un lume verso noi 13
di quella spera ond' uscì la primizia
che lasciò Cristo d'i vicari suoi,
e la mia donna, piena di letizia, 16
mi disse: "Mira, mira: ecco il barone
per cui là giù si visita Galizia."
Sì come, quando il colombo si pone 19
presso al compagno, l'uno a l'altro pande,
girando e mormorando, l'affezione:
così vid' ïo l'un da l'altro grande 22
principe glorïoso essere accolto,
laudando il cibo che là sù li prande.
Ma poi che 'l gratular si fu assolto, 25
tacito *coram me* ciascun s'affisse,
ignito sì che vincëa 'l mio volto.
Ridendo allora Bëatrice disse: 28
"Inclita vita per cui la larghezza
de la nostra basilica si scrisse,

CANTO 25

Fixed stars, examination of the pilgrim:, continued: saint James—hope—Beatrice certifies the pilgrim's hope—definition—what hope promises—saint John the Evangelist—blindness

If it ever happen that the sacred poem, to which both Heaven and earth have set their hand, so that for many years it has made me lean,

vanquish the cruelty that locks me out of the lovely sheepfold where I slept as a lamb, an enemy of the wolves that make war on it,

with other voice by then, with other fleece I shall return as poet, and at the font of my baptism I shall accept the wreath:

for there I entered the faith that makes souls known to God, and later Peter so circled my brow because of it.

Then there moved toward us another light from the sphere that had sent forth the first fruit Christ left of his vicars,

and my lady, full of gladness, said to me: "Behold, behold: here is the baron for whose sake they visit Galicia down there."

As when one dove perches next to its companion and, turning and murmuring, they express affection to each other:

so I saw the one great glorious prince receive the other, praising the food of their feast up there.

But once their glad greetings had been accomplished, in silence *coram me* each became still, so fiery that they overcame my sight.

Smiling then Beatrice said: "Famous soul, by whom the liberality of our kingly palace was written,

fa risonar la spene in questa altezza:
tu sai che tante fiate la figuri,
quante Iesù ai tre fé più carezza."
"Leva la testa e fa che t'assicuri,
ché ciò che vien qua sù del mortal mondo
convien ch'ai nostri raggi si maturi."
Questo conforto del foco secondo
mi venne, ond' io leväi li occhi a' monti
che li 'ncurvaron pria col troppo pondo.
"Poi che per grazia vuol che tu t'affronti
lo nostro Imperadore, anzi la morte,
ne l'aula più secreta co' suoi conti,
sì che, veduto il ver di questa corte,
la spene, che là giù bene innamora,
in te e in altrui di ciò conforte:
dì quel ch' ell' è, dì come se n'infiora
la mente tua, e dì onde a te venne."
Così seguì 'l secondo lume ancora.
E quella pïa che guidò le penne
de le mie ali a così alto volo
a la risposta così mi prevenne:
"La Chiesa Militante alcun figliuolo
non ha con più speranza, com' è scritto
nel Sol che raggia tutto nostro stuolo:
però li è conceduto che d'Egitto
vegna in Ierusalemme per vedere
anzi che 'l militar li sia prescritto.
Li altri due punti, che non per sapere
son dimandati ma perch' ei rapporti
quanto questa virtù t'è in piacere,
a lui lasc' io, ché non li saran forti
né di iattanza; ed elli a ciò risponda,
e la grazia di Dio ciò li comporti."
Come discente ch'a dottor seconda,
pronto e libente in quel ch' elli è esperto
perché la sua bontà si disasconda:
"Spene," diss' io, "è uno attender certo
de la gloria futura, il qual produce
grazia divina e precedente merto.

cause hope to resound in these heights: you
know that you personify it as many times as
Jesus did most honor to the three."
"Raise your head and be reassured, for what comes
up here from the mortal world must ripen in our rays."
This encouragement came to me from the
second flame, and so I lifted up my eyes to the
mountains that had earlier bent them down with
excessive weight.
"Since our Emperor in his grace wills that
before your death you confront his counts in the
innermost hall,
so that, having seen the truth of this court,
you may strengthen the hope of it, which makes
folk love well down there, in yourself and others:
tell what it is, tell how your mind blossoms
with it, and tell whence it came to you." Thus the
second light continued.
And that compassionate lady who guided the
feathers of my wings to such high flight, thus
forestalled my reply:
"The Church Militant has no son with more
hope, as is written in the Sun that irradiates all
our host:
therefore is it granted him that from Egypt he
come to Jerusalem to see, before his warfare is
concluded.
The other two points, which are not asked for
knowledge, but so that he may relate how much
this virtue pleases you,
I leave to him, for they will not be difficult nor
cause for boasting; so let him answer them, and
may the grace of God permit him that."
Like a student who seconds his teacher,
ready and willing in what he knows well, so that
his goodness may no longer be hidden,
"Hope," I said, "is a sure expectation of the
future glory, produced by God's grace and
preceding merit.

Da molte stelle mi vien questa luce,
ma quei la distillò nel mio cor pria,
che fu sommo cantor del sommo Duce.
'Sperino in te,' ne la sua tëodia
dice, 'color che sanno il nome tuo':
e chi nol sa, s' elli ha la fede mia?
Tu mi stillasti, con lo stillar suo,
ne la pistola poi, sì ch' io son pieno
e in altrui vostra pioggia repluo."
Mentr' io diceva, dentro al vivo seno
di quello incendio tremolava un lampo
sùbito e spesso a guisa di baleno;
indi spirò: "L'amore ond' ïo avvampo
ancor ver' la virtù che mi seguette
infin la palma e a l'uscir di campo
vuol ch'io respiri a te che ti dilette
di lei, ed emmi a grato che tu diche
quello che la speranza ti 'mpromette."
E io: "Le nove e le Scritture antiche
pongon lo segno, ed esso lo mi addita,
de l'anime che Dio s'ha fatte amiche.
Dice Isaia che ciascuna vestita
ne la sua terra fia di doppia vesta:
e la sua terra è questa dolce vita;
e 'l tuo fratello assai vie più digesta,
là dove tratta de le bianche stole,
questa revelazion ci manifesta."
E prima, appresso al fin d'este parole,
"*Sperent in te*" di sopr' a noi s'udì,
a che rispuoser tutte le carole.
Poscia tra esse un lume si schiarì
sì che, se Cancro avesse un tal cristallo,
l'inverno avrebbe un mese d'un sol dì.
E come surge e va ed entra in ballo
vergine lieta, sol per fare onore
a la novizia, non per alcun fallo:
così vid' io lo schiarato splendore
venir a' due, che si volgieno a nota
qual conveniesi al loro ardente amore.

From many stars this light comes to me, but
he who first distilled it in my heart was the
highest singer of the highest Lord.
'Let them hope in thee,' he says in his divine
song, 'those who know thy name'; and who
does not know it, if he has my faith?
Along with his instilling, you instilled it in me
then in your epistle, so that I am full, and I in
turn rain on others what you have rained on me."
While I was speaking, within the living bosom
of that flame a flashing trembled, sudden and
repeated like lightning;
then he breathed: "The love with which I am
still aflame toward the virtue that followed me to
my palm and my retirement from the field
makes me speak again to you who delight in
it, and I wish you to say what it is that hope
promises you."
And I: "The new Scriptures and the old set
forth the target for the souls whom God has
made his friends, and that fact points it out to me.
Isaiah says that in the homeland each will be
clothed in a double raiment: and the homeland
is this sweet life;
and your brother far more distinctly, where he
treats of the white stoles, manifests this revelation
to us."
And first, after the end of these words,
"*Sperent in te*" was heard above us, to which all
the carols replied.
Then among them one light brightened so,
that if Cancer had such a crystal, the winter
would have a month of one sole day.
And as a joyous virgin rises and walks and
joins the dance, solely to pay honor to the new
bride, not because of any fault:
so I saw the brightened splendor come to the
two who were turning to a melody such as
befitted their ardent love.

Misesi lì nel canto e ne la rota,
e la mia donna in lor tenea l'aspetto,
pur come sposa tacita e immota.
"Questi è colui che giacque sopra 'l petto
del nostro pellicano, e questi fue
di su la croce al grande officio eletto."
La donna mia così, né però piùe
mosser la vista sua di stare attenta
poscia che prima le parole sue.
Qual è colui ch' adocchia e s'argomenta
di vedere eclissar lo sole un poco,
che per veder non vedente diventa:
tal mi fec' ïo a quell' ultimo foco,
mentre che detto fu: "Perché t'abbagli
per veder cosa che qui non ha loco?
In terra è terra il mio corpo, e saragli
tanto con li altri che 'l numero nostro
con l'etterno proposito s'agguagli.
Con le due stole nel beato chiostro
son le due luci sole che saliro,
e questo apporterai nel mondo vostro."
A questa voce l'infiammato giro
si quïetò con esso il dolce mischio
che si facea nel suon del trino spiro:
sì come per cessar fatica o rischio
li remi, pria ne l'acqua ripercossi,
tutti si posano al sonar d'un fischio.
Ahi quanto ne la mente mi commossi
quando mi volsi per veder Beatrice,
per non poter veder, benché io fossi
presso di lei e nel mondo felice!

It joined the song there and the circling, and
my lady kept her eyes fixed on them, like a
silent and unmoving bride.
"This is he who reclined on the breast of our
Pelican, and from the Cross he was chosen for
the great duty."
So my lady, nor did her words, before or after,
cause her eyes to become less attentive.
Like one who gazes and strives to see
the sun eclipsed, if only a little, and who through
seeing becomes unseeing:
so did I become toward that last fire, while
these words were spoken: "Why do you dazzle
yourself to see what has no place here?
On earth my body is earth, and it will be there
with the others until our number equals the
eternal purpose.
Only the two lights that ascended have the
two stoles in the eternal cloister, and you shall
take this back to your world."
At this voice the fiery circling ceased and with
it the sweet blend made by the sound of its triple
breath:
so, in order to avoid labor or danger, oars that
just now struck the water pause all together at
the sounding of a whistle.
Ah, how perturbed did I become in my mind
when, turning to see Beatrice, I could not see,
although I was
near her, and in the happy world!

NOTES

1–12. If it ever happen . . . because of it: The canto of hope has a proem unique in the *Comedy* in referring, albeit briefly, to the poet's actual circumstances during the composition of the poem (the only other comparable passage is 17.55–92, a prophecy not spoken by the poet *in propria persona*), and in expressing the poet's ardent hope of returning to Florence amid public recognition of his achievement as a poet (one notes the implicit, unquestioning confidence that he will complete the *Comedy* itself).

He hopes that this masterpiece of his, for which he has endured privation and fatigue (it has made him "lean for many years"), will soften the cruel political vengefulness that prevents his return to his beloved Florence. In that case, late in his life (with changed voice and gray hair), he will return to accept the poet's reward in his "beautiful Saint John" (*Inf.* 19.17), where he was baptized.

1–4. If it ever happen . . . vanquish the cruelty: The sacred subject, the poet's love of Florence, and the beauty of the poem should win the love and therefore the compassion of its Florentine readers in particular (for art as winning love, see *Purg.* 10.97–99 and 26.109–14, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 7; on the purging of anger see *Purg.* 15.85–132). For the *Comedy* as a wooing of Florence, parallel with the wooing of the hostile "donna pietra," see Durling 1992; Dante's earthly hopes are expressed much less confidently than his hopes for the next life, which are the principal topic now, as his examination continues. Note that *continga* [happen] and *vinca* [vanquish] are both present subjunctives.

1–2. the sacred poem . . . have set their hand: One notes the parallel, but at a much more solemn level, with the characterization of the poem as "my comedy" (*Inf.* 21.2; cf. *Inf.* 16.127–31). What Dante means by line 2 has been variously explained: "Heaven" can refer to Dante's theological studies, to God's grace, or perhaps to astrological influences (as in 22.112–33); "earth" to Dante's experience of worldly affairs or to circumstances (the support of friends and patrons, for instance), or to his own unremitting efforts.

4–6. the lovely sheepfold . . . make war on it: Childhood memories of his own innocence and of Florence as protective enclosure. The depiction of the small, idealized early Florence, in Cacciaguida's account (16.97–135), is prompted by the pilgrim's request to be told of "the sheepfold of saint John," and it is centered on the Baptistery. The proverbial "lamb" is first the poet as

young child, but it soon blends into the adult, also innocent and guileless, who entertains political enmity for the "wolves" (Ghibellines, popes, Black Guelphs, Angevins) that threaten it.

7–12. with other voice . . . because of it: Note the sense of the completion of a circle (and a return to the original circular enclosure, both of the city walls and of the Baptistery); it is a version, on the scale of the poet's individual life, of the theme of return to origins further and further into the past of the human race as a whole (in Canto 24 we reach the Apostles, in Canto 26 Adam himself—the spiritual fathers and the literal father of all); in the sphere of the fixed stars we reach the origin of all diversity and Gemini, the pilgrim's natal sign, in 28–29 the angels, and ultimately God himself, the origin of all things.

7–8. with other voice . . . return as poet: Dante's repeated word "altro/a" [other] is richly ambiguous. The obvious meaning is that he will have aged: his voice will be that of an old man, his hair (his "fleece") will be gray or white; but the lines also mean that he will have acquired the authoritative voice of a great poet (and perhaps a vindicated political theorist), which he did not have when he left Florence, and the "fleece" he will bring back will be also the poem itself, the parallel of his poetic "voyage" with that of Jason and the Argonauts, in quest of the Golden Fleece (first mentioned in *Inf.* 18.87), having been explicitly established since 2.1–18, to be claimed finally in 33.94–96.

8–12. at the font . . . because of it: One notes the centrality, in this system of concentric circles, of faith (the foundation of all other virtues, says saint Peter in 24.89–90—their "substance," cf. 24.64–75), *entered* into within the city walls, within the baptistery, in the font itself (whether *Inf.* 19.16–25 implies sprinkling or immersion, the head is the chief target of baptism). One reason why the pilgrim's confession of faith in 24.139–44 focuses exclusively on the existence and triune nature of God is his being in the very center from which all else radiates (Cantos 28–29).

9. I shall accept the wreath: Dante has in mind here the traditional laurel wreath of the poet (as in 1.22–33), expecting the reader to recognize "cappello" as an adaptation of Fr. *chapelet* [chaplet, wreath]. His ambition for the laurel and his homesickness are both explicit themes in his poetic exchange (ca. 1319–20) with Giovanni del Virgilio, a professor at Bologna, who urged him to write epic poetry in Latin, for which the university would crown him with laurel (*Ecl.* 1.35–40), either literally or metaphorically; Albertino Mussato had already been crowned laureate by Padua in 1305, for his Latin tragedy *Ecerinis*, in the first Renaissance revival of the ancient custom; Dante never

refers explicitly to Mussato. Dante's reply, in the first pastoral elegy of the Renaissance, is in part:

> Nonne triumphales melius pexare capillos
> et patrio, redeam si quando, abscondere canos
> fronde sub inserta solitum flavescere Sarno?
> …Cum mundi circumflua corpora cantu
> astricolesque meo, velut infera regna, patebunt,
> devincire caput edera lauroque iuvabit .
> (*Eclogue* 2.42–50)
> [Would it not be better to comb my triumphant locks
> beside my native Arno, if I ever return, and there hide them, now white,
> beneath the woven leaves, in the place where they formerly were bland?
> …When the bodies that revolve about the world,
> and the dwellers in the stars, like the infernal regions,
> shall be published in my song, that will be the time
> to bind my head about with ivy and with laurel.]

The clear reference to the *Paradiso* not yet being finished (more likely than merely to its not yet having been published) is important evidence for its dating.

10–11. the faith…known to God: At the Last Judgment, Christ will turn his face away from all but the saved; as Virgil observes in *Inf.* 4. 35–36, "Baptism is the gateway to the faith that you believe." Also, at baptism the child receives the name by which he or she will be known in this world and the next. Since the *Comedy* is itself primarily the expression of Dante's faith, his being crowned at the baptismal font makes the baptismal waters those of a true Castalia (see the note to *Purg.* 31.140–41).

11–12. and later…because of it: The proem ends, rounded out with the recall of the ending of Canto 24, emphasizing the parallelism of the two imagined crownings.

13–99. Then there moved…all the carols replied: Now saint James arrives to conduct the examination on hope, and it becomes apparent that Dante is drawing on the exegetical tradition according to which the three Apostles (Peter, James the elder, and John) whom Christ singled out to be with him on three important occasions (the resurrection of the daughter of Jair [Luke 8.1–42, 49–56], the Transfiguration [Matt. 17–18, Mark 9.2–6, Luke 9.28–36], and the Agony in the Garden [Matt. 26.36–46]) personified the three

theological virtues (Peter faith; cf. 24.34–39; John love, because of Jesus's special love for him; cf. lines 112–14, with note; and James hope).

13–39. Then there moved . . . with excessive weight: The introduction to this second phase of the pilgrim's examination is less elaborate than the introduction to the first (24.1–51): a light moves from the circle from which saint Peter came, unidentified, like him (24.19–23), but unlike him (cf. 24.24–33) not speaking immediately before Beatrice identifies him, in lines 17–18 (as she does saint Peter in 24.34–39). New is the expression of mutual affection of the two, after which they turn silently to the pilgrim (lines 19–27), and (as in 24.34–45) Beatrice asks that the pilgrim be examined (lines 28–33); in 24.46–51 the pilgrim prepares for the questioning like a university student, but here the saint first encourages him so that he raises his eyes, no longer dazzled (lines 34–39). For the preliminaries to the third phase of the examination, see 25.100–26.1–6, with notes.

13–27. Then there moved . . . overcame my sight: The arrival of saint James. "Sphere" is here again used for "circle" or "carol" (cf. 24.11, 16, and cf. *Purg.* 15.1–3, with note). One notes the official, ceremonial, Latinizing language (*mira* [gaze, admire], *primizia* [first fruit], *vicari* [vicars], *barone* [baron], *grande principe* [great prince], *pande* [sets forth], *prande* [feeds], *coram me* [facing me], *gratular* [express gladness], *assolto* [absolved]), *ignito* [fiery], increasingly emphasizing the analogy with an imperial court (explicit in lines 30 and 40–43).

14–15. from the sphere . . . left of his vicars: Saint Paul wrote of the resurrected Christ as "the first fruits of them that slept" [*primitiae dormientium*] (1 Cor. 15.20); saint Peter, as first vicar of Christ (i.e., pope), would be the first fruit of the foundation of the Church at Pentecost.

16–18. And my lady . . . Galicia down there: The shrine of saint James at Compostella (supposedly the burial place of the Apostle who came furthest west) was a particularly popular goal of pilgrimage from early times.

19–24. As when one dove . . . feast up there: Doves are emblems of hope in many bestiaries (see Shoaf 1975).

25–27. But once their glad . . . overcame my sight: It is their gaze that overburdens his eyes; *coram me* means "facing me," "gazing at me." Previously he had been able to endure the sight of them.

28–39. Smiling then Beatrice . . . with excessive weight: Beatrice asks saint James to examine the pilgrim on hope, the saint encourages him to endure the brightness, and the pilgrim finds his eyes no longer weighed down.

29–33. Famous soul by whom . . . honor to the three: Beatrice cites two of saint James's qualifications to conduct this examination: (1) he wrote of "the liberality of our royal palace" [*basilica*, ultimately from Gr. *basileus*, king, sc. "house of the king"] in his Epistle (lines 29–30); Dante seems to have in mind 1.5: "But if any of you want wisdom, let him ask [it] of God, who giveth to all men abundantly and upbraideth not; and it shall be given" (cf. Matt. 7.7–8); (2) he personifies hope in the incidents where Jesus showed most honor to the three (lines 32–33; cf. the note to lines 13–99, above).

34–39. Raise your head . . . with excessive weight: The vision of those who come from below must ripen in the rays emitted by the apostles: note the sun imagery.

38–39. I lifted my eyes . . . with excessive weight: Saints Peter and James are the "mountains," of course; Dante is echoing Ps. 120.1: "I have lifted up mine eyes to the mountains, whence help shall come to me." Stäuble 1996 argues for a reference to the "gradual psalms" (Ps. 119–34) as a group; Ps. 120 is the only one cited by Dante.

40–48. Since our Emperor . . . second light continued: The formal examination begins again; after a ceremonious apostrophe acknowledging the special grace received by the pilgrim (lines 40–42), the saint defines the purpose of his questions (the strengthening of hope in the pilgrim and on earth, lines 43–45), and poses three questions: the definition of hope, how it "blossoms" in the pilgrim's mind, and whence it came to him (lines 46–47).

40–42. Since our Emperor . . . in the innermost hall: This is the most concrete and elaborate instance of the analogy of Heaven with an imperial court that we have so far encountered (see *Inf.* 1.124–29). The term "counts" is drawn from the office of high officials instituted by Charlemagne, some of whom traveled through his territories supervising government, while others, such as Roland, were in charge of border districts, called "marches." They are imagined as meeting in a council chamber from which all but the emperor's closest associates are barred.

43–45. so that, having . . . yourself and others: Cf. the notes to 24.40–45, and to lines 76–78 and 85–86 below.

49–63. And that compassionate . . . permit him that: Beatrice intervenes to answer the second of saint James's questions (lines 46–47), so that the pilgrim will not be required to praise himself; she will leave the other two to him.

52–56. The Church Militant . . . warfare is concluded: We have known for some time that the pilgrim's salvation is assured, but we may well be surprised to learn that of all the living (all the Church Militant, still waging its war against sin and the Devil, in which the pilgrim is also enlisted), no one has higher hopes of eternal bliss than the pilgrim! She says that the strength of his hope is what justifies his journey to the next world: from Egypt, the land of exile and bondage (whether figuring this life or Hell), to Jerusalem, the Holy City in the Promised Land (which figures Heaven: this fundamental pattern of the Exodus underlies the entire poem and furnishes its basic allegory (see our introduction to the *Purgatorio*, pp. 12–15).

It is perhaps not surprising that Cacciaguida's statement of the purpose of the pilgrim's journey—to prepare him to write the *Comedy*—is not mentioned here (nor is the question raised of how much, in Dante's mind, his sense of merit—cf. line 69—and to that extent, his hope of Heaven, is based on his pride in his poem, like his earthly hopes expressed in lines 1–12).

58–60. not asked . . . virtue pleases you: That is, not asked in order that the pilgrim may show his understanding or knowledge of the nature of hope, but, since in the Gospel incidents in which saint James figures and in his Epistle, not much is said of hope, those on earth might need assistance in understanding why he personifies it; he will show how much he loves it.

61–63. I leave to him . . . permit him that: That the two points will not be difficult for the pilgrim indicates that the question she has just answered would have been: how could he have compared his own hopes with those of others? (It has not seemed difficult for the poet, however.) But he still needs God's help in answering.

64–79. Like a student . . . have rained on me: The pilgrim's reply to the first and third of the saint's questions (definition and source of hope).

64–66. Like a student . . . no longer be hidden: Parallel to the more extended analogy with the bachelor undergoing the examination for the master's degree (24.46–51). In the first case, the bachelor knows he must not pretend to determine the question; here the imagined situation is a more advanced level of attainment in which the student is given a subordinate expository role; the emphasis is on his easy confidence that he can perform well.

67–69. Hope, I said . . . and preceding merit: Like the definition of faith (which of course was a famous scriptural passage), this definition of hope (though not scriptural) is drawn from the twelfth-century handbook of Catholic theology that every Scholastic theologian (including Albert the Great and Aquinas) made his debut by expounding, Peter Lombard's *Liber sententiarum* (3.26); the definition was virtually a commonplace.

69. God's grace and preceding merit: This formula summarizes the traditional doctrine, based on James 2.17: "Faith without works is dead" (i.e., to be saved, one must *have acquired* "merit" by good works—the merit must "precede" the moment of decision; faith alone is insufficient). This was to be one of the major points of controversy between the Catholics and the Protestants during the Reformation, the latter holding to the Pauline formula that "if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2.21; cf. Rom. 4: works done without faith are worthless).

70–78. From many stars . . . have rained on me: The biblical source of the pilgrim's hope. Among the many passages ("many stars") that might be cited, the pilgrim singles out a psalm of David's and the Epistle of saint James, which have so filled him with hope that he can instill it in ("rain it on") others. The light imagery ("stars," "light," line 70: note the implicit Augustinian allegory of the Bible as the firmament over the believers, *Confessions* 13.15) becomes combined with that of dew (lines 71, 76) and then of rain (line 78; see the notes to 24.91–96 and 91–93).

71–75. he who first . . . has my faith: The first to penetrate the pilgrim's heart was the psalmist David, particularly with Ps. 9.11, which is literally translated in lines 73–74 and quoted in Latin by the assembled souls in line 98.

74–75. those who know . . . has my faith: David was credited by the Christians with having systematically prophesied the Incarnation of Christ in his Psalms, which the influential commentary by saint Augustine interpreted as spoken in the person of Christ (hence David was known as "the Prophet"). The "name" referred to in line 74 is of course that of Christ, as "my faith" (line 75) indicates.

76–78. Along with his instilling . . . have rained on me: As the commentators observe, although the word *hope* does not appear in the Epistle of saint James, it contains much urging not to be discouraged by difficulties and persecutions (the appropriateness of the latter to Dante's circumstances is obvious).

77–78. I am full . . . have rained on me: The lines refer to the *Comedy*, of course. Note the conspicuous Latinism in "repluo" [I rain again], a coinage based on Lat. *pluo*, *pluere* [to rain] (from which It. *piovere*), ordinarily used only as an impersonal verb in the third person; cf. 24.91, with note.

79–81. While I was . . . repeated like lightning: The saint responds to the pilgrim's words with heartfelt rejoicing, like the lightnings of joy in 18.34–48.

82–99. then he breathed . . . all the carols replied: The saint's final question (what is it the pilgrim hopes for?), the pilgrim's answer, and the great rejoicing of all present.

82–84. The love with which . . . retirement from the field: The saint introduces his last question with a statement of his great love for the virtue hope, which followed him (did not abandon him; cf. 11.64–72) to his "palm" (i.e., his victorious death as a martyr). Note the military metaphor in "retirement from the field" (i.e., of battle), referring to his death. These lines recall the thought of lines 31–33 and 43–45.

88–96. And I: The new . . . revelation to us: The pilgrim's reply, which he states obliquely and metaphorically, citing passages from both the Old and New Testaments (note the parallel with 24.91–93). The term *segno* is particularly rich in meanings (sign, gesture, miracle, letter, target); the reference here is to what hope aims at.

91–93. Isaiah says that . . . this sweet life: Dante refers to Is. 61.7: "Propter hoc in terra sua duplicia possidebunt, laetitia sempiterna erat eis" [Therefore shall they receive double [*duplicia*, a neuter plural] in their land, everlasting joy shall be unto them]; since the context concerns amends for past suffering and shame, the exegetes connected this verse with Is. 61.3: "I will give them . . . the robe [*pallium*] of praise in exchange for sorrow" (and cf. 61.10), and with Apoc. 7.9 (see next note).

94–96. and your brother . . . revelation to us: "Your brother" refers to saint John, author of the Apocalypse (both he and saint James were sons of Zebedee): "I saw a great multitude . . . standing before the throne, and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes [*stolae*], and palms in their hands." At least as early as Gregory the Great (540–604), the two stoles were interpreted as the gladness of the soul and the glory of the resurrected body (Chiavacci Leonardi). Thus the pilgrim expresses the hope of both beatitudes (cf. lines 127–29).

97–99. And first, after the end . . . the carols replied: What is meant by "above us" (line 98) is not specified: it may mean that Ps. 9.11 ("Sperent in te" [Let them hope in thee]) is spoken or sung by Christ, who has withdrawn from sight (23.85–87). The assembled souls, who are still without their bodies, echo the verse: they must wait for reunion with them (which they strongly desire: cf. 14.43–78, with notes). Dante would not seem to agree with Aquinas's argument that the souls in Heaven do not feel hope, since they have attained the chief goal of hope, and therefore reunion with the body no longer seems difficult (*ST* 2a 2ae q. 18 a. 2 ad 4); on a related point, cf. *Purg*. 11.22–26, with note.

100–139. Then among them . . . in the happy world: The rest of the canto, with the arrival of saint John the Evangelist and the pilgrim's desire to see his face, constitutes the extended introduction to the third phase of the pilgrim's examination, which we have learned to expect, and which takes place in Canto 26. As previously, a new soul joins the previous examiner(s), is welcomed, and is identified by Beatrice; now the pilgrim strives to see him, and the saint explains why he cannot. Then the pilgrim goes blind.

100–102. Then among them . . . one sole day: The brightness of this soul is sunlike. In winter the sun is in Capricorn, opposite Cancer on the Zodiac. If Cancer held a star this bright, the daily setting of the sun would not bring night at all, but the rising of a second sun, and winter would be one long day.

103–11. and as a joyous virgin . . . unmoving bride: Heaven is the wedding feast of the Lamb (24.31–6), as these feminine, nuptial images recall (saint John as a joyous virgin honoring a bride by joining the dance, Beatrice as like the bride) in a striking way. Saint John was the disciple whom Jesus loved (see the note to 24.124–26).

103–9. and as a joyous virgin . . . and the circling: As lines 107–8 indicate, saints Peter and James have begun a round dance of their own, which saint John now joins (the implication is that all the other round dances have also started again).

112–14. This is he . . . for the great duty: As she did for the two first examiners, Beatrice identifies the newcomer clearly enough for anyone who knew the Bible well. Saint John reclines in Jesus' bosom at the Last Supper:

> When Jesus had said these things, he was troubled in spirit; and he testified, and said: Amen, amen I say to you, one of you shall betray me . . . Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom

> Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, and said to him, Who is it of whom he speaketh? He therefore, leaning on the breast of Jesus, saith to him: Lord, who is it? Jesus answered: He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped. And when he had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot (John 13.21–26).

And it was to saint John that Jesus, speaking from the Cross, entrusted the care of his mother:

> Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary of Ceophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that he saith to his disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour, the disciple took her as his own (John 19.25–27).

118–39. Like one who gazes . . . in the happy world: The pilgrim strives in vain to penetrate with his sight the intense brightness that hides the face of saint John (as of all the souls since Justinian); he is like one endangering his sight by gazing at the sun during an eclipse (the focused rays of the sun can burn the retina). His blindness at first seems to him as like such an earthly blindness.

122–29. Why do you dazzle . . . back to your world: The saint interprets the pilgrim's effort to see him as an instance of the legend that he had ascended bodily to Heaven (Ariosto deliciously has his Englishman Astolfo, who never lacks aplomb, meet saint John the Evangelist on the moon, where he rides on the hippogriff to recover Orlando's [Roland's] lost wits [*Orlando furioso* Cantos 34–35]) and John explains that the only ones to have their bodies ("the two stoles": cf. lines 91–96, with notes) in Heaven ("the eternal cloister") are Christ and the Virgin, who alone "ascended." The bodily ascent of Elijah is also excluded (cf. *Inf.* 26.34–39, with notes).

130–35. At this voice . . . sounding of a whistle: As saint John speaks, the "fiery circling" (the dance of the three apostles, since they have been dancing to "their triple breath," i.e., their singing) ceases, and this is compared with the simultaneous lifting of oars at the whistle of a pilot or coxswain. Note the emphasis on unison of motion, as in 12.10–21 and 13.16–21.

136–39. Ah, how perturbed . . . in the happy world: The precise moment when the pilgrim becomes blind is not identified; the moment is parallel to the shout in Saturn that so terrifies him (21.139–22.1–9).

CANTO 26

Mentr' io dubbiava per lo viso spento,
de la fulgida fiamma che lo spense
uscì un spiro che mi fece attento,
dicendo: "Intanto che tu ti risense
de la vista che haï in me consunta,
ben è che ragionando la compense.
Comincia dunque, e dì ove s'appunta
l'anima tua, e fa ragion che sia
la vista in te smarrita e non defunta,
perché la donna che per questa dia
regïon ti conduce ha ne lo sguardo
la virtù ch' ebbe la man d'Anania."
Io dissi: "Al suo piacere e tosto e tardo
vegna remedio a li occhi, che fuor porte
quand' ella entrò col foco ond' io sempr' ardo.
Lo ben che fa contenta questa corte
Alfa e O è di quanta scrittura
mi legge Amore o lievemente o forte."
Quella medesma voce che paura
tolta m'avea del sùbito abbarbaglio
di ragionare ancor mi mise in cura,
e disse: "Certo a più angusto vaglio
ti conviene schiarar: dicer convienti
chi drizzò l'arco tuo a tal berzaglio."
E io: "Per filosofici argomenti
e per autorità che quinci scende
cotale amor convien che in me si 'mprenti:
ché 'l bene, in quanto ben, come s'intende
così accende amore, e tanto maggio
quanto più di bontate in sé comprende.

CANTO 26

Fixed stars, examination of the pilgrim, continued: love—causes of his love of God—sight restored—Adam—length of his stay in Eden, nature of his sin, his language

While I was fearful for my extinguished sight,
from the intense flame that had put it out came a
breath that made me attentive,
saying: "Until you regain the sight you have
consumed in me, it is well that by speaking you
make up for it.
Begin therefore; and tell where your soul is
focussed, and be assured that sight is absent
but not defunct in you,
for the lady who leads you through this bright
region has in her glance the power of the hand
of Ananias."
I said: "At her pleasure, soon or late, let the
remedy come for my eyes, which were the gates
when she entered with the fire that always burns
in me.
The Good that satisfies this court is Alpha
and O of all the writing that Love reads to me,
whether soft or loud."
That same voice which had relieved my fear
at my sudden dazzlement now made me
concerned to speak further,
saying: "Surely you must sift with a finer sieve:
you must tell who aimed your bow at such a target."
And I: "By philosophical arguments and by
authority descending from here, that love is
necessarily imprinted in me:
for the good, in so far as it is good, as soon
as it is known kindles love, and the greater, the
more goodness it comprehends within itself.

Dunque a l'essenza ov' è tanto avvantaggio
che ciascun ben che fuor di lei si trova
altro non è ch' un lume di suo raggio,
più che in altra, convien che si mova
la mente, amando, di ciascun che cerne
il vero in che si fonda questa prova.
Tal vero a l'intelletto mïo sterne
colui che mi dimostra il primo amore
di tutte le sustanze sempiterne.
Sternel la voce del verace autore,
che dice a Moïsè, di sé parlando:
'Io ti farò vedere ogne valore.'
Sternilmi tu ancora, incominciando
l'alto preconio che grida l'arcano
di qui là giù sovra ogni altro bando."
E io udi': "Per intelletto umano
e per autoritadi a lui concorde,
d'i tuoi amori a Dio guarda il sovrano.
Ma dì ancor se tu senti altre corde
tirarti verso lui, sì che tu suone
con quanti denti questo amor ti morde."
Non fu latente la santa intenzione
de l'aguglia di Cristo, anzi m'accorsi
dove volea menar la mia professione.
Però ricominciai: "Tutti quei morsi
che posson far lo cor volgere a Dio
a la mia caritate son concorsi:
ché l'essere del mondo e l'esser mio,
la morte ch' el sostenne perch' io viva,
e quel che spera ogne fedel com' io,
con la predetta conoscenza viva,
tratto m'hanno del mar de l'amor torto
e del diritto m'han posto a la riva.
Le fronde onde s'infronda tutto l'orto
de l'Ortolano etterno am' io cotanto
quanto da lui a lor di bene è porto."
Sì com' io tacqui, un dolcissimo canto
risonò per lo cielo, e la mia donna
dicea con li altri: "Santo, santo, santo!"

Therefore toward the Essence that so
surpasses others that every good found
outside it, is nothing but a ray of its light,
more than toward anything else, the mind must
move in love, in anyone who discerns the truth
on which this proof is founded.
This truth is set forth for my intellect by him
who demonstrates the first love of all the sempiternal
substances.
The voice of the truthful Author sets it forth,
who says to Moses, speaking of himself: 'I will
make you see every Goodness.'
You set it forth for me as well, beginning the
high proclamation that cries out the secrets of
this realm down there, beyond all other blazoning."
And I heard: "According to human intellect and
authorities agreeing with it, the highest of your
loves keep turned toward God.
But say again if you feel other cords drawing
you toward him, so that you sound out with how
many teeth this love bites you."
The holy intention of Christ's eagle was not
hidden from me, for I grasped where he wished to
lead my profession.
Therefore I began again: "All the piercings that
can turn our hearts to God have worked together
in my charity:
for the existence of the world and my
existence, the death that he underwent that I
might live, and what each believer hopes for, as I do,
along with the aforesaid lively knowledge, have
drawn me from the sea of twisted love and placed
me on the shore of right love.
The leaves wherewith all the orchard of the eternal
Gardener flourishes, do I love in the measure of the
goodness that is conveyed from him to them."
When I fell silent, a most sweet singing
resounded through the heaven, and my lady was
singing with the others, "Holy, holy, holy!"

E come a lume acuto si disonna
per lo spirito visivo che ricorre
a lo splendor che va di gonna in gonna,
e lo svegliato ciò che vede aborre,
sì nescïa è la sùbita vigilia
fin che la stimativa non soccorre:
così de li occhi miei ogne quisquilia
fugò Beatrice col raggio d'i suoi,
che rifulgea da più di mille milia,
onde mei che dinanzi vidi poi,
e quasi stupefatto domandai
d'un quarto lume ch'io vidi tra noi.
E la mia donna: "Dentro da quei rai
vagheggia il suo Fattor l'anima prima
che la prima Virtù creasse mai."
Come la fronda che flette la cima
nel transito del vento, e poi si leva
per la propria virtù che la soblima:
fec' io in tanto in quant' ella diceva,
stupendo, e poi mi rifece sicuro
un disio di parlare ond' ïo ardeva,
e cominciai: "O pomo che maturo
solo prodotto fosti, O padre antico
a cui ciascuna sposa è figlia e nuro,
divoto quanto posso a te supplico
perché mi parli: tu vedi mia voglia,
e per udirti tosto non la dico."
Talvolta un animal coverto broglia
sì che l'affetto convien che si paia
per lo seguir che face a lui la 'nvoglia:
e similmente l'anima primaia
mi facea trasparer per la coverta
quant' ella a compiacermi venìa gaia.
Indi spirò: "Sanz' essermi proferta
da te, la voglia tua discerno meglio
che tu qualunque cosa t'è più certa,
perch' io la veggio nel verace Speglio
che fa di sé pareglio a l'altre cose,
e nulla face lui di sé pareglio.

And as one awakens at a bright light, because
of the spirit of sight that is drawn to the splendor
that goes through tunic after tunic,
and the one awakened recoils from what he
sees, so unknowing is sudden wakefulness until
the power of estimation comes to its aid:
thus from my eyes every impurity was put to
flight by Beatrice with the radiance of hers, for
she was shining a thousand thousand times
more brightly,
and so I saw better than before, and as one
stupified I asked about a fourth light that I saw
among us.
And my lady: "Within those rays the first soul
that the first Power ever created is worshipping
its Maker."
Like a branch that bends its summit at the
passing of the wind and then lifts itself again, its
own strength driving it upward:
so did I as she spoke, marveling, and then I
gained confidence again from a desire to speak
that burned within me,
and I began: "O fruit uniquely born mature, O
ancient father to whom each bride is daughter and
daughter-in-law,
as devoutly as I can I supplicate you to speak
with me: you see my wish, and to hear you
sooner I do not tell it."
Sometimes a hidden animal stirs in such a way
that its affect appears as its covering follows it:
similarly the first-made soul made me see
through its wrapping how gaily it came to please
me.
Then it breathed: "Without its being expressed
by you, I discern your desire better than you do
whatever is most sure to you,
for I see it in the truthful Mirror that makes itself
like other things, but other things cannot make
him like them.

Tu vuogli udir quant' è che Dio mi puose
ne l'eccelso giardino ove costei
a così lunga scala ti dispuose,
e quanto fu diletto a li occhi miei,
e la propria cagion del gran disdegno,
e l'idïoma ch'usai e che fei.
Or, figliuol mio, non il gustar del legno
fu per sé la cagion di tanto essilio,
ma solamente il trapassar del segno.
Quindi onde mosse tua donna Virgilio
quattromilia trecento e due volumi
di sol desiderai questo concilio,
e vidi lui tornare a tutt' i lumi
de la sua strada novecento trenta
fiate mentre ch' ïo in terra fu'mi.
La lingua ch' io parlai fu tutta spenta
innanzi che a l'ovra inconsummabile
fosse la gente di Nembròt attenta,
ché nullo effetto mai razïonabile,
per lo piacere uman, che rinovella
seguendo il cielo, sempre fu durabile.
Opera naturale è ch' uom favella,
ma così o così, Natura lascia
poi fare a voi secondo che v'abbella.
Pria ch' i' scendessi a l'infernale ambascia,
I s'appellava in terra il sommo Bene
onde vien la letizia che mi fascia,
e *El* si chiamò poi. E ciò convene,
ché l'uso d'i mortali è come fronda
in ramo, che sen va e altra vene.
Nel monte che si leva più da l'onda
fu' io, con vita pura e disonesta,
da la prim' ora a quella che seconda,
come 'l sol muta quadra, l'ora sesta."

You wish to know how long ago God placed
me in the high garden where she there readied
you for so long a stairway,
and how long it was a delight to my eyes, and
the true reason for his great anger, and the
language that I spoke and that I devised.
Now, my son, not the tasting of the tree in itself
was the cause of so long an exile, but only the
going beyond the mark.
Down there whence your lady sent Virgil, for
four thousand, three hundred and two turnings of
the sun I yearned for this assembly,
and I saw him return along the road of all his
lights nine hundred thirty times, while I lived on
earth.
The language that I spoke was all extinct
before Nimrod's people became intent on the
unfinishable work,
for no rational effect, because of human
preference, which changes following the
heavens, has ever been enduring.
It is a natural operation that man speaks, but
whether in this way or that, Nature allows you to
do as it may please you.
Before I descended to the oppression of Hell,
the highest Good, whence comes the gladness
that envelopes me, was called *I* on earth
and later was called *El*. And that is necessary,
for the usage of mortals is like a leaf on the
branch, which departs and another comes.
On the mountain that most lifts itself above the
waves I lived, with pure and sinful life, from the
first hour to that which comes,
as the sun shifts quadrants, after the sixth hour."

NOTES

1–69. While I was fearful . . . Holy, holy, holy: In his answers to John the Evangelist, the pilgrim does not define, but lays claim to the third, supreme theological virtue, that of Love, or charity ("the greatest of these is charity," 1 Cor. 13.13). John's formulation "God is love" (1 John 4.16; and cf. *Inf.* 3.6; *Par.* 4.118, 6.11) and his testimony to God's love of the world (John 3.16) qualify him as examiner; for his special closeness to Christ, see 25.112–17 and note.

1–15. While I was fearful . . . that always burns in me: While blinded, the pilgrim is questioned on his love, after which his sight is restored. John's questioning is less formal than that of the previous two examiners. Virgil had defined and explained love to fill in the time when the pilgrim was unable to ascend; see *Purg.* 17.91–139, 18.19–39 and notes.

7–9. Begin therefore . . . not defunct in you: "Is focused" [*s'appunta*] is an optical metaphor, implying God as the focal point (see 28.16–39 and note). The pilgrim's "absent" [*smarrita*] sight echoes the term for the lost path at the beginning of the poem (*Inf.* 1.3, 15.50).

10–12. for the lady who leads you . . . the hand of Ananias: Beatrice will restore the pilgrim's vision with her eyes, as Ananias, a disciple of Christ, restored with his hands the vision of Saul of Tarsus after he was blinded when Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9.17–18). Here John takes the role of Christ; some commentators view Beatrice as representing the pure early Church (see *Purg.* 32.31–36 and note).

After allusions earlier in *Paradiso* (see 1.4–6, 73–75, 2.37–45 and notes; also 15.28–30 and note), this is the second explicit reference in the *Comedy* to Paul as a model for the pilgrim (see *Inf.* 2.28, 32 and notes; and see 30.49–51 and note).

13–15. I said . . . always burns in me: The pilgrim's answers to John begin with recall of his first sight of Beatrice (*VN* 2.3–6). Dante juxtaposes his love for Beatrice with his love of God; when rightly ordered, love of the creature leads to the Creator (cf. Rom. 1.20, cited in Additional Note 14).

16–66. The Good . . . from him to them: The pilgrim states that the chief object of his love is God, the supreme Good (Lines 7–18), to which he was directed by philosophical arguments and authority (19–39), by the witness of

OT and NT writers (40–48), and by gratitude for the creation and redemption of mankind (55–66). God, "the good as such," is inherently lovable; loving Him brings satisfaction and rest [*quietus*] (cf. 1.97 and note; also 3.70). See *Purg.* 18.46–75, 55–60 and notes.

16–18. The Good that satisfies . . . whether soft or loud: A circumlocution, appropriately enough, names God with the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, as in the beginning and final chapters of Apocalypse (1.8, 17–18; 21.6, and especially 22.13: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end"). That God satisfies (*contenta*) the heavens conceals a pun, for he also "contains" them (cf. 8.98; see 28.64–78, 30.10–12 and notes). God is the alphabet of all the pilgrim's loves (Carroll). See Additional Note 14.

17–18. all the writing . . . whether soft or loud: Like a monastic lector or university teacher, a personified Love reads aloud from a written text, a typical use of books in manuscript culture (see *VN* 25 and *Purg.* 24.48–52, with notes); that the pilgrim is blinded foregrounds the auditory message. The varying intensity of Love's reading may reflect the importance of the texts invoked, including those in this canto (see note to lines 43–45). For a scene of reading leading to error, see *Inf.* 5.127–38, with notes.

17. Alpha and O: Greek *omega* (ω) in the text of Apocalypse was only rarely written out as a word in medieval Latin Bibles. That God is both beginning and end reiterates the pattern of procession and return: as the last book of the Bible, Apocalypse predicts the end of time (cf. 10.6–7) as Genesis describes its beginning (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 16, "O qui perpetua" lines 27–28 and notes, *Ep.* 13.90). For this sphere as the origin of time, see 27.100–120 and note, and Additional Note 3.

The text of Apocalypse is itself represented as a book dictated to John by the "Son of Man," the form in which Christ appears to the evangelist (Apoc. 1.10–11). Judgments are read out of a great book (Apoc. 5.1); an angel gives a book to the evangelist to eat (Apoc. 10.8–10), signifying his prophetic vocation (cf. *Par.* 17.130–32, 18.1–3 and notes); finally, "the heavens departed as a book folded up" (Apoc. 6.14; see 23.112 and note). Codicological terms are used for some of the biblical sources in the pilgrim's examinations (see 24.93). For similar metaphors, see notes to *Purg.* 26.112–14, 115–17, and *Inter cantica* there.

19–24. That same voice . . . aimed your bow at such a target: John wants to know how the pilgrim came to aim his desire (his bow; see 15.43–45, *Purg.* 16.48 and notes) at the target, God. For the bow as signifying God's intention, see 1.118–26; 8.103–5 and notes, and 29.24.

22. saying: Surely you must sift with a finer sieve: A sieve separates out different sizes of material (cf. *DVE* 1.11.6, where the metaphor refers to the sifting of Italian dialects): John requires more particulars.

28–36. for the good . . . this proof is founded: Syllogistic reasoning shows that: the good is lovable in proportion to its goodness; but God is the supreme Good (*summum bonum*), so God will be loved above all things. Aquinas cites Pseudo-Dionysius: "[He says] the good is attributed to God as first efficient cause, saying that God is called good,'as from whom all things exist'" (*ST* 1a .q. 6 a. 1). Lady Philosophy at *Consol.* 3.pr.2, 3.pr.9–11 affirms the consensus that the good is lovable, that it is the first cause and principle of unity; that the good and ultimate blessedness are one; and that the good is the goal of all things.

31–36. Therefore toward the Essence . . . this proof is founded: This part of the argument probably relies on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (12.7–8; see 28.40–42 and note) and on the *Liber de causis* pr.4 (see 1.4–5 and note, and Additional Note 10) cited at *Conv.* 3.2.7: "Because, as is read in the aforementioned book, 'the first thing is existence, and before that nothing is,' the human soul wishes to exist with all its desire, and because its existence depends from God and through him is preserved, naturally it desires to be united with God."

33. is nothing but a ray of its light: Cf. *Ep.* 13.70: "Every causative power is a ray emanating from the first cause that is God," where the secondary causes (the angels) are "rays" of the first cause; here the light imagery applies to all creatures.

37–39. This truth is set forth . . . sempiternal substances: The author alluded to here is Aristotle, known as "the Philosopher" [lover of wisdom] by antonomasia, and for Dante "master of those who know" (*Inf.* 4.131). In *Metaphysics* 12.8 Aristotle posits that for the universe to be preserved, there must be an eternal first heaven moving in a circle, which is moved by an unmoved mover; as this mover is supremely good, it moves by being desired: "We say therefore that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration continuous and eternal belong to God; for this is God." Dante refers to a philosophical demonstration, so the author alluded to cannot be, as some commentators affirm, Pseudo-Dionysius, whose knowledge of divine things derived from Paul's authority (see 10.115–17 and note).

It has surprised commentators that Dante cites Aristotle before mentioning Scripture, but this is consistent with Dante's view that rational demonstration, deducible from first principles, is logically prior to revelation by authority.

According to Virgil human awareness of "first knowables," as well as love of "first desirables," including the supreme Good, are innate (*Purg.* 18.49–54, 55–60, with notes). Aquinas bases his five proofs of God's existence (*ST* 1a q. 2 a. 2–3) on the idea that it is demonstrable without appeal to revelation, and cites with approval Aristotle's definition of God as the unmoved mover. See Additional Note 2.

40–45. The voice of the truthful Author . . . beyond all other blazoning: The pilgrim's authorities are Moses ("the lawgiver" [*Moisè legista*, *Inf.* 4.57]), to whom the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, were traditionally attributed; and the last NT author, John, author, for medieval readers, of the fourth and last Gospel and of Apocalypse, as well as of two catholic Epistles; see *Purg.* 29.142–44 and note): thus first and last, Alpha and O, once more.

40–42. The voice of the truthful Author . . . see every Goodness: God is both the represented speaker of the words spoken to Moses in Ex. 33.19 ("I will show thee all good [*bonum*]") and, having inspired Moses's words, the true author of Exodus; Bonaventura cites the same words to describe God's goodness (*Itinerarium mentis in Deum* 5.8).

Line 42 also paraphrases the first line of Guido Cavalcanti's answer to the first poem of Dante's *Vita nova*, narrating a dream of Beatrice and Love: "You saw, it seems to me, all worthiness" [*Vedeste al mio parere onne valore*]; the force of *valore* in the two cases is distinct; Cavalcanti was thinking of the god of love of literary tradition. See *VN* 24, *Inf.* 10.63–72, *Par.* 13.130–42 and notes, and Durling 2003.

43–45. You set it forth . . . all other blazoning: Both John's Gospel and the Apocalypse have been put forward as the text here alluded to: the Gospel, because its prologue opens with "In the beginning" (cf. line 43), and its narrative with the Baptist's heralding of Christ (by "crying out" [*clamat*], John 1.15); and because *preconio* ("proclamation") seems synonymous with *Evangelium* ("good news"). In favor of Apocalypse is "blazoning" [*bando*], used for the "last trump" at *Purg.* 30.13 (and see 30.34); the Apocalypse also refers, with "Alpha and O," to a beginning (1.8), and "cries out" with mention of "a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Apoc. 1.10). Though "secrets" (line 44) might favor the riddling Apocalypse, the prologue to John's Gospel (lines 1–14) also reveals mysteries, and indeed digests NT theology: the Creation, the procession of the Word, the Word made flesh, and the redemption of Man are all topics touched on by the pilgrim's answers. Given the use of other texts by John for the pilgrim's answers (e.g. 1 John 4.7–9), John's entire corpus is probably to be kept in mind, with the Gospel uppermost.

43. You set it forth for me as well: *Sterne* [set forth], literally "stretches out," is used at lines 37, 40, and here, once for each main authority; we can imagine books open, or scrolls unrolled, for consultation. Cf. *Purg.* 6.34, Virgil's "my writing is plain" [*piana*], i.e., "flat"). See note to line 17, and Additional Notes 13 and 14.

46–66. And I heard . . . from him to them: John wants to hear other reasons why God is worthy of love (lines 49–51): the pilgrim cites the creation of the world and of his own existence (line 58), and in last place (lines 64–66), the existence of others. The most important reason is the Redemption, with the promise of the Resurrection (lines 59–60): implicitly, it is the pilgrim's faith in these that brought about his rescue from moral peril (lines 62–63).

With his questions, John is focusing the pilgrim's love on its object, as implied by his first query (lines 7–8; see also lines 22–23, 25); this prepares the pilgrim's later reacquisition of vision (lines 70–73) and reception of a "bright light" [*lume acuto*], literally "sharp light."

49–51. But say again . . . this love bites you: The language of cords and bites (*morsi*) echoes the diction of Dante's harsh love lyrics, the *rime petrose* (see "Così nel mio parlar," verses 22–26, 31–33; and Chapter 5 of Durling/Martinez 1990): another phase of the poet's career echoed in this canto.

52–53. The holy intention . . . to lead my profession. The eagle was said to possess sight strong enough to gaze directly into the sun (see 1.46–48, 20.31–37 and notes); compare lines 7–8. John, whose emblem since early Christian times was the eagle of Apoc. 4.7 (see *Purgatorio*, fig. 9) is eaglelike in focusing the pilgrim on the intended conclusion.

55–57. Therefore I began again . . . in my charity: "Piercings" here is, again, literally "bites, stings" [*morsi*] that drive the heart to love God; angels, too, are "pierced" or "stung" with desire (28.43–45 and note). The goads at *Inf.* 3.64–66 are distant, distorted echoes of these.

59. the death that he underwent that I might live: Christian theology understands the Redemption as springing from God's love for man; see John 3.16 and 1 John 4.9, "By this hath the charity of God appeared to us, because God hath sent his only begotten son into the world, that we may live by him," a close parallel with the end of line 59; see also 7.91–120 and notes.

60. what each believer hopes for, as I do: Professing love, the pilgrim confirms that he has faith and hope, the virtues previously examined.

63–64. have drawn me . . . the shore of right love: The pilgrim's salvation, too, is an effect of God's love. Mention of sea and shore recall the first simile in the poem, comparing the pilgrim to a survivor of shipwreck (*Inf.* 1.22–24; on that occasion, too, the season of creation helped the pilgrim, *Inf.* 1.37–43 and note). Also evoked is the Exodus through the Red Sea, Dante's model for the meaning of the pilgrim's journey (see Introduction, p. 10; *Purg.* 2.46–48 and note; and our introduction to *Purgatorio*, pp. 12–15).

62. twisted love: Purgatory rectifies deviant human love (cf. *Purg.* 10.3 and note, and *Purg.* 17.100–102, 25.109–11.

64–66. The leaves wherewith . . . from him to them: The creation is God's garden (cf. *Purg.* 28.103–20 and note); its trees and leaves are the creatures, which the pilgrim loves in proportion to their participation in the supreme Good. Commentators find this profession tepid; but of the eight uses of *Amor* and *amare* in the canto, only this last has the pilgrim actually say "he loves" [*am' io*].

For the horticultural imagery, cf. Christ's words in John 15.1 ("I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman [*agricola*]") and 12.71–72, 82–87 and notes; tree imagery is found in the canto again at lines 85–86 and 137–138, suitable to the former custodian of the garden of Eden (line 110; Gen. 2.15).

67–69. When I fell silent . . . Holy, holy, holy: With the angels and the blessed, Beatrice joins in singing the *Sanctus*, the song of the seraphim and the evangelists around the divine throne (Is. 6.3, and Apoc. 4.8); and, on earth, the *hymnus angelicus* sung as the conclusion to the Preface to the Mass, heralding the coming of the Lord in the Eucharist (see 7.1–3[4] and notes); here the *Sanctus* is given in the vernacular, in anticipation of lines 124–38; see note to 27.1–3). The song expresses joy in the pilgrim's witness to his love and heralds a new arrival whose special relation to Christ justifies his reception. See Additional Note 4.

70–142. And as one awakens . . . after the sixth hour: The second half of the canto narrates the pilgrim's meeting with Adam, the father of the human race (cf. Wisdom 10.1–2, *Conv.* 4.15.4, and see note to lines 91–96). Adam's creation confirms the pilgrim's affirmation of God's love and goodness in creating the world and humankind (see *Purg.* 17.91–92, 25.70–72 and notes).

For earlier scenes of awakening in confusion, cf. *Purg.* 9.34–42, 32.61–90 and notes (and *Inf.* 1.1–9); in *Ep.*13.77–80, Paul's ignorance after his rapture, and the fact that the Apostles Peter, James, and John "fell upon their face" before Christ's transfiguration, are treated as precedents for the oblivion that

limits the narration of the pilgrim's experience in *Paradiso* (in fact the three apostles are told by Christ to remain silent about their vision—they do not lose consciousness; see Matt. 17.1–9).

70–81. And as one awakens . . . that I saw among us: The pilgrim's sight meets the light reflected from Adam. In describing an inner light joined to an external one, these lines suggest how visual sensation models the act of intellectual sight or understanding (see 30.82–90 and note, and Additional Note 3). Cf. John 1.9: "That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." Adam is a forerunner of Christ (just seen at 23.79–84).

70–75. And as one awakens . . . comes to its aid: Dante explains the mechanism of sight at *Conv.* 2.9.4–5 and 3.9.7–9, as he derived it from Plato, Galen, and their medieval commentators, especially Avicenna and Albertus Magnus: the "spirit of sight," one of the "animal spirits" that mediate between the senses and the brain (*VN* 2.4–7), receives the optical image (the immaterial form) of the external object in the lens of the eye, and channels it to the common sense, the internal sensitive faculty and "fountain" or principle of all the senses, in the forebrain; this sense offers the image for evaluation by the "power of estimation," the faculty that classifies and recognizes images (see also *Purg.* 18.22–27, 61–66 and notes).

72. through tunic after tunic: The clothing metaphor in *gonna* recalls the technical term used by medieval physiology for certain ocular membranes [*tunicae*]; see *Conv.* 3.9.13; here the eyelids are also meant. The process of sight itself, said to be instantaneous like the propagation of light (see *Conv.* 3.9.9), is rhetorically slowed by line 72, acknowledging the solemn meeting ahead.

76–78. thus from my eyes . . . thousand times more brightly: "Impurities" [*quisquilia*], or "chaff," as at Amos 8.6, recalls the restoration of Paul's sight: "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it were scales [*squamae*], and he received his sight; and rising up, he was baptized" (Acts 9.18).

79–81. and so I saw better . . . that I saw among us: In Acts 9.7 Christ speaks to Paul, but is apparently visible only to him: "Now the men who went in company with him, stood amazed, hearing indeed a voice, but seeing no man."

82–96. And my lady . . . I do not tell it: Within his wrapping of light, Adam is desiring [*vagheggiando*] God, echoing the pilgrim's testimony of his own love for God (see especially lines 64–66), and note to lines 133–35.

85–90. Like a branch . . . that burned in me: The image testifies to the natural emboldening of the pilgrim in the presence of his first ancestor (see 16.16–18, which recalls *Inf.* 2.121–132). Despite other parallels advanced (e,g., Statius, *Theb.* 6.854–57), this adapts *Consol.* 3.m.2.27–30, illustrating the force of natural desire for the good:

> Bend now with all your strength,
> a sapling's top to the ground:
> but if the right hand bowing it lets go
> its top again points straight at the sky [*recto spectat vertice caelum*].

91–96. and I began . . . I do not tell it: Made directly by God (Gen. 2.7), Adam came into existence fully grown; since Eve was shaped from a rib in his side (Gen. 2.21–23), and as he fathered Eve's daughters, he is the ancestor of every woman born, and, since women marry his male descendants, every woman's father-in-law (cf. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 15.16). Dante also calls Adam the "man never born" (7.26), since he was formed with neither mother nor milk (*DVE* 1.6.1).

91. and I began: O fruit uniquely born: Some have thought it tactless to compare Adam to the fruit of Eden (cf. *Purg.* 22.132; 23.34, 68; 24.104), but as a symbol of what is desirable, the *pomo* drives the pilgrim to recover Eden (*Inf.* 16.61; *Purg.* 27.45, 115). In Eden, Christ is the apple tree that yields the fruit of the heavenly wedding feast (*Purg.* 32.74).

92. O ancient father: Adam is last but one of the father figures the pilgrim meets in his ascent of the ladder of time and causation, as well as space; the only prior origin of his being will be God himself. See 16.16–21 and note.

97–114. Sometimes a hidden animal . . . that I invented: Adam transmits his joy at the meeting through the light mantling him (lines 97–102), and intuits in God the pilgrim's four questions for him (lines 103–14).

97–102. Sometimes a hidden animal . . . to please me: Some commentators see a hooded hawk or caparisoned horse implied, but Dante's language is generic. Adam's delight ("gaily") means he is not only well disposed, but joyful (see lines 134–35). Compare *Inf.* 26.48, 58–60 and notes, and *Inter cantica* to *Purgatorio* 26.

103–8. Then it breathed . . . cannot make him like them: God's mind is like a mirror in which all things are reflected; insofar as he causes all universals and

singulars, God resembles all things (*ST* 1a q. 57 a. 2, *Conv.* 3.14.2–3); but no created thing can fully mirror or comprehend God (see 9.73–81 and note)

109–14. You wish to know . . . and that I devised: The pilgrim has four questions: how long ago was Adam created and placed in Eden? How long did he remain there, and why did God cast him out? What language did he fashion and speak?

114. the language that I spoke and that I devised: Note the inversion (*hysteron proteron*), by which Adam appears to speak before he has language. Adam uses It. *fe[c]i* [I made] of the language he spoke; compare *DVE* 1.6.7, of Adam's language (which Dante then supposed had been Hebrew), "that language which the first speakers crafted [*fabricaverunt*] with their lips." See note to lines 124–38, and see *Purg.* 26.115–17 and note.

115–42. Now, my son . . . after the sixth hour. Answering the four questions, Adam changes the order in which they were asked (3, 1, 4, 2): first, he gives the *cause* of the long exile; second, the *length* of that exile, which lasted until the Resurrection (see *Par.* 7.28–33 and note); third, he asserts the *mutability* of language (with mention of the tower of Babel, described as an additional Fall at *DVE* 1.7.2–3); and fourth, he gives the *duration* of his stay in Eden. Emphasis on the hour of the Fall, traditionally thought also to be the hour of the Crucifixion (see *Conv.* 4.23.11), surely influenced the placement of this last answer (see note to lines 139–42), but the order of answers also means that they begin and end with Eden. As they also include mention of the earth, Limbo (Hell), and Heaven, they sketch in words a journey through all time and space; see note to line 133.

115–17. Now, my son . . . the going beyond the mark: Adam first answers the third and most consequential question: his fault was not the violation of God's ban on eating from a specific tree, but his disregard for a prohibition as such (see *Purg.* 32.37–60 and note). The Fall was due to proud disobedience, the radical sin that included all the others (see Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 14.12–14, *ST* 2a 2ae q. 163 a. 1), including the vice of gluttony (see *Purg.* 24.115–18); thus Dante can refer elsewhere to the sin of Adam and Eve as one of tasting and eating (cf. Gen. 3.3, and see 13.39, 32.121–123, and 1.68 and note). For evocations of the Fall in Dante's Eden, see *Purg.* 29.22–30, 30.52–54 and notes.

117. the going beyond the mark: Adam's phrasing has recalled to readers Ulysses' transgression of the limits established by Hercules (see *Inf.* 26.90–142, especially 107–9 and 142 with notes, and *Inferno* Additional Note 11). As a

failed explorer and deceptive counselor, Ulysses is a persistent if problematic parallel to the pilgrim (see *Purg.* 1.130–32, 19.16–24 and notes; see *Par.* 27.82–84 and note).

118–23. Down there whence your lady . . . while I lived on earth: Adam's answer to the first question is indirect and nonchronological: he first recalls the 4,302 years spent in Limbo after his death, then adds his 930 years of life (Gen. 5.5), expressed as solar years, that is, the motion of the sun around the zodiac (cf. 16.34–39 and note). There he stops, with a total of 5,232 years. To arrive at the figure the pilgrim requests, the 1,266 years must be added between Christ's atonement, at 34 years of age, for Adam's sin, until the present: the total is 6,498 years, the age of the world calculated for the emperor Constantine by Eusebius of Caesarea (see 6.1–3 and note). For one implication of this reordering, see note to line 133.

118. Down there whence your lady . . . I yearned for this assembly: Adam shared the yearning of the just in Limbo for the coming of Christ, as dramatized in the Gospel of Nicodemus (see *Inf.* 4.52–63, 9.64–72, 12.31–45 and notes). Adam's desire for this "assembly" echoes Cacciaguida's for sight of the pilgrim (see 15.49–54 and note).

118. Down there whence your lady moved Virgil: Virgil's name appears for the last time in the poem, rhyming with "exile" [*essilio*], as it does at *Inf.* 23.126 and *Purg.* 21.18 (and see 23.134, 136). Taken with mention of God as "true author" (line 40), in contrast to Virgil as "my author" (*Inf.* 1.85), this passage suggests the subordination of Virgil's authority to that of Scripture; see also lines 26 and 47. (See Brownlee 1984b, and especially Ascoli 2008).

124–38. The language . . . departs and another comes: Adam's third answer, which reflects Dante's interest in the question of the origin of language, responds to the pilgrim's last question, and is granted more space (five terzinas; the others receive one or two). In *DVE* 1.4–6 Dante shared the widely held assumption that Hebrew had been Adam's language, and that, unaffected by the confusion of tongues (Gen. 11.7–9), it had survived to be spoken by Christ. Dante's Adam now corrects this view: where, in the treatise, only Hebrew survives the confusion of Babel, Adam now thinks of Hebrew as a later development and includes it with the languages Dante held to be mutable (see *DVE* 1.9.6–10).

124–29. The language . . . has ever been enduring: Adam reveals that before Nimrod planned the tower of Babel (as explained in Augustine, *De civ. Dei*;

see *Inf.* 31.67–81 and note), his original language had gone out of use. Since man after the Fall is a "most unstable and variable animal" (*DVE* 1.9.6), a language unfixed by grammar and literature will, like all things fashioned by man, vary with time and place (see also *Conv.* 1.5.7–9). The influence of the heavens on natural linguistic change is implicit in the references to solar motion in lines 118–24.

130–32. It is a natural operation . . . as it may please you: That language is mutable and arbitrary is spelled out in Aristotle, Boethius, and other texts, but also in Horace, *Ars poetica* 70–72: "Many words shall rise again that formerly fell away, and those now honored shall decline, if usage wills it, which is the arbiter, law, and rule of speech," cited at *Conv.* 2.13.10.

132. as it may please you: "Please" [*abbella*] echoes, though in subjunctive mood, the first words of a canzone by Folquet of Marseilles (see 9.37–42 and note, *DVE* 2.6.6), also used to begin the Provençal lines spoken by Arnaut Daniel (*Purg.* 26.140). The association of Adam's original speech with the origins of vernacular poetry continues (see Contini 1970). See note to lines 134–35.

133–38. Before I descended . . . one departs and another comes: Variation of the names of God exemplifies the changes languages undergo over time. First the "supreme Good" was known as I or J, to indicate the first integer, standing for God's unity (see *Consol.* 3.pr.12.33 and 4.pr.6.8, cited in note to 20.19–21). Later, Adam explains, God was addressed as *El*, identified by Isidore of Seville as the first name given to God by the Jews (*Etym.* 7.1). See Chiavacci Leonardi, note to 134–35, and *DVE* 1.4.4.

133. Before I descended to the oppression of Hell: Adam mentions key stages in the pilgrim's journey: Beatrice receiving him in Purgatory (line 111) and her earlier visit to Limbo to arrange his rescue (line 118). The phrase *infernale ambascia* [oppression of Hell], was used by the pilgrim to Marco Lombardo, of his passage through Hell (*Purg.* 16.39). Adam and the pilgrim, both exiles, have shared "the journey of our life" (*Inf.* 1.1).

134–35. the highest Good . . . gladness that envelops me: Because all joy is in God, and God is all joy, "God" had to be, according to Dante, the first word spoken by Adam, for it was suitable that he begin in joy (*DVE* 1.4.4). Though God did not need Adam to speak audibly, he wished him to do so, "so that in the unfolding of such a gift he who freely endowed us should be glorified [*gloriaretur ipse*]" (*DVE* 1.5.2). Significantly, the first noun in *Paradiso* is *gloria.*

The connection between the origin of language (see lines 82–83, 102) and Dante's use of Italian *gioia*, the term used in early love lyric for the sexual enjoyment of love (Provençal *joi*; see note to 9.37), is suggestive: God's creation through the Word is the archetype of speech and of poetic utterance.

137–38. for the usage of mortals . . . one departs and another comes: Dante draws on Horace's *Ars poetica*, lines 60–63 (as well as on lines 70–72, cited in the note to lines 130–32 of this canto):

> Ut silvae foliis pronos mutantur in annos,
> prima cadunt, ita verborum vetus interit aetas,
> et iuvenum ritu florent modo nata vigentque.
> [As the forests change their leaves in the declining year,
> and the earliest fall; so an old age of words passes away,
> and, as youth will, those just born flower and thrive.]

137–38. like a leaf on the branch: Cf. "orchard" (line 64), "gardener" (65), "leaves" and "branch" (64, 85), and fallen Adam himself, the first apple (*pomo*, "fruit," 91). Adam despoiled the tree in Eden, which makes his family tree deciduous, so to speak; see *Inf.* 3.112–17 (the damned offspring of Adam as dead leaves), and *Purg.* 11.115–17 and notes. As in *Purg.* 32.37–60, however, the tree is renewed by Christ, thus also linked to lines 137–38 (see "renews" [*rinovella*] at line 128, also used for the renewal of the pilgrim; see *Purg.* 33.142–45 and note).

139–42. On the mountain . . . after the sixth hour: With further mention of the place of Eden (see line 110) on the mountain in the southern hemisphere at the antipode of Jerusalem (see *Inf.* 26.133–35, 34.106–26; *Purg.* 3.12–15, 4.79–84, 28.97–102 and notes), Adam affirms that he dwelt there innocently until the seventh hour of the day, counting from prime (about 6 AM); thus his Fall came shortly after noon, a view widely shared. According to the Gospels, Christ was crucified about noon and died at about 3 PM, at the end of the sixth or midday canonical hour; for Dante, Christ's death occurred near noon, beginning the sixth hour (cf. *Conv.* 4.23.9–11, 16; *Inf.* 21.112–14 and note). Both the Fall and the Crucifixion occurred on a Friday, the sixth day of the week. See also 30.1–3 and notes. For the pilgrim's six hours in this heaven, see 27.79–81 and note.

CANTO 27

"Al Padre, al Figlio, a lo Spirito Santo," 1
cominciò, "gloria!" tutto 'l Paradiso
sì che m'inebrïava il dolce canto.
Ciò ch'io vedeva mi sembiava un riso 4
de l'universo, per che mia ebbrezza
intrava per l'udire e per lo viso.
Oh gioia! Oh ineffabile allegrezza! 7
Oh vita intègra d'amore e di pace!
Oh sanza brama sicura ricchezza!
Dinanzi a li occhi miei le quattro face 10
stavano accese, e quella che prima venne
incominciò a farsi più vivace,
e tal ne la sembianza sua divenne 13
qual diverrebbe Iove, s'elli e Marte
fossero augelli e cambiassersi penne.
La Provedenza, che quivi comparte 16
vice e officio, nel beato coro
silenzio posto avea da ogne parte,
quand' ïo udi': "Se io mi trascoloro, 19
non ti maravigliar, ché, dicend' io,
vedrai trascolorar tutti costoro.
Quelli ch' usurpa in terra il luogo mio, 22
il luogo mio, il luogo mio, che vaca
ne la presenza del Figliuol di Dio,
fatt' ha del cimitero mio cloaca 25
del sangue e de la puzza onde 'l perverso
che cadde di qua sù, là giù si placa."
Di quel color che per lo sole avverso 28
nube dipigne da sera e da mane
vid' ïo allora tutto 'l ciel cosperso.

CANTO 27

Fixed stars, continued: saint Peter denounces the popes—backward glance again—ascent to Primum mobile—inversion of values on earth

"To the Father, to the Son, to the Holy Spirit,"
all Paradise began, "glory!" so that the sweet
sing-ing inebriated me.
What I saw seemed a smile of the universe;
thus my intoxication came in through hearing
and through sight.
Oh joy! Oh ineffable happiness! Oh life made
whole with love and peace! Oh riches secure
without greed!
Before my eyes the four torches stood
flaming, and the one that had come first began
to glow more vigorously
and in appearance became such as Jove
would be, if he and Mars were birds and
exchanged feathers.
The Providence that distributes turns and
duties there, had imposed silence on the
blessed choir on every side
when I heard: "If I change color, do not
marvel, for while I speak you will see all these
change color.
He who on earth usurps my place, my place,
my place, which is vacant in the presence of
the Son of God,
has made my burial place a sewer of the
blood and stench that placate the perverted one
down there, who fell from up here."
With that color which the opposing sun paints
on a cloud at evening and at morning, I then
saw all Heaven suffused .

E come donna onesta che permane
di sé sicura e per l'altrui fallanza,
pur ascoltando, timida si fane:
così Beatrice trasmutò sembianza,
e tale eclissi credo che 'n Cielo fue
quando patì la suprema Possanza.
Poi procedetter le parole sue
con voce tanto da sé trasmutata
che la sembianza non si mutò piùe:
"Non fu la sposa di Cristo allevata
del sangue mio, di Lin, di quel di Cleto,
per essere ad acquisto d'oro usata,
ma per acquisto d'esto viver lieto
e Sisto e Pïo e Calisto e Urbano
sparser lo sangue dopo molto fleto.
Non fu nostra intenzion ch' a destra mano
d'i nostri successor parte sedesse,
parte da l'altra del popol cristiano,
né che le chiavi che mi fuor concesse
divenisser signaculo in vessillo
che contra battezzati combattesse,
né ch'io fossi figura di sigillo
a privilegi venduti e mendaci,
ond' io sovente arrosso e disfavillo.
In vesta di pastor lupi rapaci
si veggion di qua sù per tutti i paschi!
O difesa di Dio, perché pur giaci?
Del sangue nostro Caorsini e Guaschi
s'apparecchian di bere! O buon principio,
a che vil fin convien che tu caschi!
Ma l'alta Provedenza, che con Scipio
difese a Roma la gloria del mondo,
soccorrà tosto, sì com' io concipio,
e tu, figliuol, che per lo mortal pondo
ancor giù tornerai, apri la bocca
e non asconder quel ch' io non ascondo."
Sì come di vapor gelati fiocca
in giuso l'aere nostro quando 'l corno
de la capra del ciel col sol si tocca:

And like a virtuous lady who remains sure of herself but, merely hearing of another's fault, is abashed by it:

so did Beatrice transmute her appearance, and such an eclipse, I believe, took place in Heaven at the death of the supreme Power.

Then his words proceeded with a voice so transmuted that his appearance was not more changed:

"The bride of Christ was not raised up by my blood, by Linus's, by that of Anacletus, to be used for acquiring gold,

but to acquire this happy life did Sixtus and Pius and Calixtus and Urban shed their blood after much weeping.

It was not our intention that on the right hand of our successors one part of the Christian people should sit, and the other on the other side,

nor that the keys granted to me should become an emblem on a standard warring against the baptized,

nor that I should be a figure on a seal for privileges sold and falsified, for which I often blush and shoot sparks.

In shepherds' clothing rapacious wolves can be seen from up here in all the pastures! O protection of God, why are you still inert?

Cahorsans and Gascons prepare to drink our blood! O good beginning, to what base end must you fall!

But the high Providence that with Scipio defended in Rome the glory of the world, will come to our aid soon, as I conceive,

and you, my son, who because of your mortal weight will go back down again, open your mouth and hide not what I do not hide."

As with frozen vapors our air snows downward when the horn of the heavenly Goat touches the sun:

in sù vid' io così l'etera addorno
farsi e fioccar di vapor trïunfanti
che fatto avien con noi quivi soggiorno.
Lo viso mio seguiva i suoi sembianti,
e seguì fin che 'l mezzo, per lo molto,
li tolse il trapassar del più avanti.
Onde la donna, che mi vide assolto
de l'attendere in sù, mi disse: "Adima
il viso e guarda come tu se' vòlto."
Da l'ora ch' ïo avea guardato prima
i' vidi mosso me per tutto l'arco
che fa dal mezzo al fine il primo clima,
sì ch'io vedea di là da Gade il varco
folle d'Ulisse, e di qua presso il lito
nel qual si fece Europa dolce carco.
E più mi fora discoverto il sito
di questa aiuola, ma 'l sol procedea
sotto i mie' piedi un segno e più partito.
La mente innamorata, che donnea
con la mia donna sempre, di ridure
ad essa li occhi più che mai ardea,
e se Natura o arte fé pasture
da pigliare occhi per aver la mente
in carne umana o ne le sue pitture,
tutte adunate parrebber nïente
ver' lo piacer divin che mi refulse
quando mi volsi al suo viso ridente.
E la virtù che lo sguardo m'indulse
del bel nido di Leda mi divelse
e nel ciel velocissimo m'impulse.
La parti sue vicinissime e eccelse
sì uniforme son ch' i' non so dire
qual Bëatrice per loco mi scelse,
ma ella, che vedëa 'l mio disire,
incominciò, ridendo tanto lieta
che Dio parea nel suo volto gioire:
"La natura del mondo, che quïeta
il mezzo e tutto l'altro intorno move,
quinci comincia come da sua meta,

so did I see the aether grow adorned and
snow upward with the triumphant vapors that
had sojourned there with us.
My sight was following their semblances, and
it followed them until the intervening medium,
being great, deprived it of passing further.
Therefore my lady, who saw me absolved
from looking up, said to me: "Lower your gaze,
and see how you have turned."
Since the hour when I had first looked, I saw
that I had moved through all the arc that the first
clime makes from its middle to its end,
so that I saw beyond Gades the mad crossing
of Ulysses and, nearer here, the shore where
Europa made herself a sweet burden.
And the site of this little threshing-floor would
have been further discovered to me, but the sun
below my feet was proceeding more than a sign
ahead.
My enamored mind, that ever courts my lady,
more than ever burned to turn my eyes back to her,
and if Nature or art have ever made bait to
capture the eyes and so gain the mind in human
flesh or paintings of it,
all, gathered together, would seem nothing
next to the divine beauty that shone on me
when I turned to her smiling eyes.
And the power her glance instilled in me
uprooted me from Leda's lovely nest and lifted
me up to the heaven that is swiftest.
Its closest and its highest parts are all so
uniform that I cannot say which Beatrice chose
to be my place,
but she, seeing my desire, began, smiling so
happily that God seemed to be rejoicing in her
face:
"The nature of the world, which stills its center
and moves all the rest around it, here begins as
from its goal,

e questo cielo non ha altro *dove*
che la mente divina, in che s'accende
l'amor che 'l volge e la virtù ch' ei piove.
Luce e amor d'un cerchio lui comprende,
sì come questo li altri, e quel precinto
colui che 'l cinge solamente intende.
Non è suo moto per altro distinto,
ma li altri son mensurati da questo,
sì come diece da mezzo e da quinto,
e come il tempo tegna in cotal testo
le sue radici e ne li altri le fronde
omai a te può esser manifesto.
O cupidigia, che i mortali affonde
sì sotto te che nessuno ha podere
di trarre li occhi fuor de le tue onde!
Ben fiorisce ne li uomini il volere,
ma la pioggia continüa converte
in bozzacchioni le sosine vere.
Fede e innocenza son reperte
solo ne' parvoletti; poi ciascuna
pria fugge che le guance sian coperte.
Tale, balbuzïendo ancor, digiuna,
che poi divora, con la lingua sciolta,
qualunque cibo per qualunque luna,
e tal, balbuzïendo, ama e ascolta
la madre sua, che con loquela intera
disïa poi di vederla sepolta.
Così si fa la pelle bianca nera
nel primo aspetto de la bella figlia
di quel ch' apporta mane e lascia sera.
Tu, perché non ti facci maraviglia,
pensa che 'n terra non è chi governi,
onde sì svïa l'umana famiglia.
Ma prima che gennaio tutto si sverni
per la centesma ch' è là giù negletta,
raggeran sì questi cerchi superni
che la fortuna che tanto s'aspetta
le poppe volgerà u' son le prore,
sì che la classe correrà diretta,
e vero frutto verrà dopo 'l fiore."

and this heaven has no other *where* than the
mind of God, in which is kindled the love that
turns it and the power that it rains down.
Light and love enclose it with one sphere, as
this does all the others, and that girding only he
who girds it understands.
Its motion is not marked by another's, but the
others are measured by this one, as ten is
measured by half and fifth,
and how time keeps its roots in this flowerpot,
and its foliage in the others, can now be
manifest to you.
O cupidity, you so submerge mortals that
none has the power to raise his eyes above
your waves!
True, the desire still blooms in men, but your
continual rain converts the healthy plums into
blasted ones.
Faith and innocence are found only in little
ones; then both flee before the cheeks are covered.
This one, while still a babbler, observes fasts,
and later, when his tongue is loosed, devours
whatever food in whatever month,
and this one, while still a babbler, loves
and obeys his mother, and later, with full command
of speech, desires to see her buried.
Thus their white skin turns black at the first
sight of the lovely daughter of him who brings
morning and leaves evening.
You, so that it will not amaze you, consider
that on earth there is none who governs, and
thus the human family goes astray.
But before January altogether unwinters itself
with the hundredth they neglect down there,
these supernal spheres will radiate in such a way
that the tempest so long awaited will turn the
sterns where the prows are now, so that the
fleet will sail ariight,
and true fruit will come after the flower."

NOTES

1–9. To the Father . . . riches secure without greed: As the pilgrim prepares to enter the ninth celestial sphere, the first nine lines of Canto 27 (= 3 x 3 x 3) play on one, three and nine: the first line addresses the three persons of the Trinity (three in one), and the third terzina consists of three lines beginning anaphorically with *Oh* (3 x 3=9). Cf. *VN* 29.2–3, and *Inf.* 3.1–9 and note.

1–3. To the Father . . . inebriated me: Heralding the end of the pilgrim's long stay in Gemini, which requires six cantos (22.100–27.96, 728 lines), the assembly sings the first part of the *Gloria*, addressed to the Trinity. Sung in the Mass and Office after psalms, canticles, and responsories, here it celebrates completion of the pilgrim's examinations: on faith, marked by the *Te deum laudamus* (in the vernacular, *Dio laudamo*, 24.112–14 and note); on hope, concluding with Ps. 9.11, *Sperent in te* (25.97–99; in vernacular form at 24.73–74); and on love, concluding with the vernacular *Sanctus* (26.67–70). Emphasized by its isolation in line 2, *Gloria* repeats the first noun in the cantica (1.1) (for Adam's first words, glorifying God, at *DVE* 1.5.2, see note to 26.134–35). See Additional Note 4.

4–6. What I saw . . . through hearing and through sight: The joy of the entire heaven recalls Beatrice's comparison of the brightness of the heavenly bodies (2.127–44) to the shining of joy in a human's eyes (2.142–44). Related effects are the "smile" and later "blushing" of the sphere (lines 28–30; cf. 18.64–69 and notes) which intoxicate the pilgrim (cf. Ps. 35.9, cited at note to 30.67; and cf. 1 Cor. 2.9, cited at note to 19.7–12). The joyful opening contrasts sharply with Peter's later attack on the papacy.

7–9. Oh joy . . . secure without greed: Peter, who shunned gold and silver (22.88), is keeper of the keys and warden of the "treasure of heaven" (Matt. 6.20; 13.44), which consists of the saved themselves—the spoils of Christ's victory (*Par.* 23.19–21)—and the accumulated merits of Christ and the saints (23.133–35 and note; cf. *Purg.* 9.117–27, 137–38, with notes, and *Inter cantica*). On earthly versus heavenly goods, see *Purg.* 15.49–75, with notes.

10–75. Before my eyes . . . deprived it of passing further: Peter, the first vicar of Christ on earth, assails contemporary popes with a level of scorn recalling *Inf.* 19.88–117, and anticipating 30.145–51 (see note there). Completing his invective with a prophecy of correction, Peter and the other souls that

descended to meet the pilgrim (see 22.30–32, and note to 23.19–20) withdraw upward and out of sight.

10–39. Before my eyes . . . was not more changed: Peter begins his attack on Boniface VIII (implied by lines 22–24) and turns an angry red; the whole heaven blushes (lines 28–30), including Beatrice (31–36), who darkens as in an eclipse. Note words with the prefix *trans-* at lines 19, 21, 34, 38.

10–15. Before my eyes . . . choir on every side: The four torches are Peter, James, John, and Adam. Peter reddens as if the planet Jupiter (see 18.64–69, 94–96 and notes)—white or silver in hue and thought of as a bird—had exchanged plumage with the red planet Mars (Buti suggests the "feathers" are the light rays of the planet); see 14.82–87, *Purg.* 2.13–15 and notes. See note to lines 4–6.

16–27. The Providence . . . who fell from up here: In tune with the emotional range of the canto (see note to lines 4–6), Peter's four terzinas begin with the designs of Providence and end with Satan in Hell. Equally drastic is the coarsening of diction, from "blessed choir" to "sewer" [*cloaca*] and "stench" [*puzza*], both unique uses in the poem. See lines 55–60 and notes.

22–24. He who on earth usurps . . . the Son of God: "Usurps" alludes to the belief that Boniface VIII had attained the papacy by persuading his predecessor Celestine V to abdicate (see *Inf.* 19.52–57 and note); more generally, it refers to Boniface's arrogance and simony (*Inf.* 27.85–93 and note; see also note to 30.145–51). Because Peter is Christ's substitute on earth, Peter's throne (his "place") stands vacant when no worthy successor occupies it (cf. 16.112–14 and note).

22–23. He who on earth usurps . . . which is vacant: Commentators see a reference here to Jeremiah's triple repetition of "the temple of the Lord" [*templum Domini*, Jer. 7.4], which is followed by a description of the temple as a den of thieves (Jer. 7.11; see 18.123 and note). Christ's triple charge to Peter to feed the sheep of the faithful (John 21.15–17) is also relevant in light of Boniface's failure to fulfill his duties as pope (see Acts 20.28–29 and *Ep.* 11.3).

25–27. has made my burial place . . . who fell from up here: Peter was martyred on the Vatican hill and his basilica later built over his grave; despite the burial there of more saints, consecrating the ground, corrupt papal rule has made the area a sewer pleasing to Satan. For the rhyme *-aca* see 16.115–17 and note.

The association of Boniface with Satan reflects the treatment of the damned popes (see *Inf.* 19.1, 22–24 and notes, and *Inferno* Additional Note 7). Is. 14.12–15 (cited in note to 29.55–57) mentions Satan's fall into Hell, and Is. 14.19 his putrefaction: "But thou art cast out of thy grave . . . and art gone down to the bottom of the pit, as a rotten carcass [*quasi cadaver putridum*]." See lines 55–60 and note.

28–30. With that color . . . all Heaven suffused: For Heaven's blush at the "adulteries" of Boniface (see *Inf.* 19.2–4 and note), Dante draws with wry humor on a scene of the goddess Diana surprised while bathing by the Theban hunter Actaeon (Ovid, *Met.* 3.183–85): "And tinted as are clouds struck by the opposing sun [*adversi solis*], or like the crimson dawn, so was the face of Diana seen unclothed."

31–36. And like a virtuous lady . . . the death of the supreme Power: This scene may represent a "passion" of the Church, embodied in Peter (see *Purg.* 20.85–96, 33.1–12 and notes). Lines 34–36 make Beatrice a mourner at the foot of the Cross (see *Purg.* 33.4–7 and note). When Christ was crucified, "from the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole land to the ninth hour" (Matt. 27.45); comparing the alteration of the planet to the Crucifixion reflects the view that the whole earth was darkened, not only Jerusalem (see 29.97–102 and note; and cf. note to lines 142–48).

40–60. The bride of Christ . . . to what base end must you fall: The early popes who suffered for the Church are a reproach to the current papacy. Peter's final apostrophes deplore hypocritical pastors, lament the falling off from holy beginnings, and appeal to God for redress (cf. *Purg.* 6.118–23 and note).

40–54. The bride of Christ . . . blush and shoot sparks: Dante condemns the worldly entanglements of the Church subsequent to the Donation of Constantine (see 6.1–3, 20.55–60, and *Inf.* 19.115–17 and notes; also *Mon.* 2.11.8, 3.10). In five terzinas, four anaphoric negations voice Peter's disapproval of the abuse of papal power with respect to the role of the Church in channeling God's grace and helping mankind to attain salvation (lines 40, 46, 49, 52; see note to lines 22–24): blood is shed to acquire plunder; the Church fosters political factions; Peter's keys appear as military insignia; and the pope's effigy, as if coined into money, warrants the sale of privileges (see *Mon.* 3.15.7).

40–45. The bride of Christ . . . after much weeping: The Church was bought with Christ's blood (cf. 11.31–33, *Purg.* 23.73–75 and note), but current popes amass gold rather than treasure in heaven (see note to lines 7–9, and cf.

18.121–23, 23.133–39 and notes). For "happy life" [*viver lieto*] rhyming with "much weeping" [*molto fleto*], cf. 16.138–40.

41–44. by my blood . . . Calixtus and Urban: Seven martyred popes who appear in the early Gelasian and Gregorian liturgical calendars are named; Pius and Cletus, or Anacletus, entered Florentine liturgical calendars after Romanizing reforms were instituted in 1310. Linus and Anacletus were martyred under the first-century emperors Vespasian and Domitian, respectively (see *Purg.* 22.82–87 and note); Sixtus and Pius died under Hadrian (second century), and Antoninus Pius, Calixtus, and Urbanus under Alexander Severus (third century). The Church, the bride of Christ, is fed on the blood of martyrs (see 25.113 and *Ep.* 11.3).

46–48. It was not our intention . . . on the other side: The favoritism and partisanship of the papacy in its treatment of Christians parody the Last Judgment, rather than preparing souls to meet it; the scene evoked is Matt. 25.31–46; cf. *Purg.* 27.58 (with note), the numerically identical canto, where Matt. 25.34 is quoted (and see 19.110–11 and note).

49–51. nor that the keys . . . against the baptized: Papal ambition means that the keys, symbolizing the power that Christ gave Peter when instituting the papacy (Matt. 16.18–19; see *Inf.* 19.101 and note, and *Inferno* Additional Note 7; *Purg.* 9.117–27 with note, and *Purgatorio* 9 *Inter cantica*) have become insignia on battle standards (cf. 6.31–33, 100–102 and notes), rather than opening a heaven of peace. Papal troops sent against Frederick II were *clavisignati*, "marked with the keys" (Grandgent); Dante also recalls the crusade against Manfred (*Purg.* 3.103–45 and notes) and that of Boniface against the Colonna (*Inf.* 27.85–93, 87–90 and notes).

52–54. nor that I should be . . . blush and shoot sparks: The image of Peter, impressed by papal signet rings on wax or lead used to seal papal documents, was used to authenticate privileges, that is, exemptions from taxes and duties, acquired by purchase (a form of simony; for the abuse of the image of the Baptist in false coinage, see *Inf.* 30.73–74, and see *Par.* 18.133–36; 19.118–20, 140–41 and notes). Christ's use of Caesar's image on a coin to distinguish what was due to Caesar from what is due to God (Matt. 22.19–21) may be in the background; see 24.83–87 and notes, and *Ep.* 5.27.

55–60. In shepherds' clothing . . . must you fall: For the commentators these words refer to the corruption of the clergy and the mendicant orders (see 11.118–32, 12.112–20, 22.88–93 and notes), but reiterated mention of a fall (cf.

line 27) evokes Satan's plunge from his high rank, which Christians took to be the meaning of Is. 14.12 (see note to lines 25–27; this passage will also be drawn on for 30.145–48). The popes and prelates follow Satan, rather than Christ.

55–56. In shepherds' clothing . . . in all the pastures: Peter speaks as if looking down and observing a spreading menace (anticipating lines 77–78). Terminology of this kind, from Jer. 23.1 ("woe to the pastors that destroy and tear the sheep of my pasture") and Matt. 7.15 ("Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves"), was commonplace in anticlerical satire (see *RR* 11123–38). The pastoral imagery derives from Peter's duty to feed the sheep, the faithful (John 21.15–17, cited at *Mon.* 3.15.3 and *Ep.* 11.3); see lines 22–23 above.

57. O protection of God, why are you still inert? See *Purg.* 6.118–120 and 20. 94–96, and the common source, the text for Sexagesima Sunday: "Rise up! why do you sleep, Lord?" [*Exsurge! Quare obdormis, domine*!] (Ps. 43.23).

58. Cahorsans and Gascons prepare to drink our blood: Transparent allusions to John XXII, a native of Cahors (see 18.130–36 and *Inf.* 11.46–51 and notes), and Clement V (17.82–84, 30.142–44; *Inf.* 19.82–84 and notes), a native of Gascony who had been Archbishop of Bordeaux. Cahorsans and Gascons were notorious for their avarice.

61–66. But the high Providence . . . what I do not hide: The second mention of Providence (see line 16), which will punish corrupt popes. Peter compares this redress to Scipio's defense of the future Roman Empire ("the glory of the world") when his victory against Carthage's Hannibal saved republican Rome (see *Conv.* 4.5.19, *Inf.* 31.115–17 and note; *Mon.* 2.9.18, and *Ep.* 11.25). Lines 64–67, involving the pilgrim in the rescue ordained by Providence, illustrate Dante's view that "excellent men were instruments whereby divine providence favored the growth of the Roman Empire" (*Conv.* 4.5.17; see Additional Notes 2 and 13). See also 17.94–99, 124–42 and notes, and Cicero, *SS* 2.3, 3.5.

64–66. and you, my son . . . what I do not hide: The third charge to the pilgrim to retell what he has learned (see 17.127–32; *Purg.* 33.52–57 and note), found here because the stars of Gemini helped shape him as a poet (see 22.112–23 and note). That he will descend because of "mortal weight" means that his "phantastic spirit" (see *Purg.* 9.13–18 and note; Robert Klein 1981) will return to his body when he wakes from his dream-vision, as he is a living man. See Introduction, pp. 14–17.

67–69. As with frozen vapors . . . touches the sun: Snow falls in winter, when the sun traverses the zodiacal sign of Capricorn (in Dante's day, from Dec. 13 to Jan. 13). Note the use of inversion and tmesis (separation of the parts of a word) in "Horn . . . of the goat" [*Capricorno* = goat horn].

70–72. so did I see . . . sojourned there with us: The commentators note the echo of *VN* 23.25, the dream of Beatrice's ascent to Heaven in an upward rain of manna. This too is an ascension, following that of Christ and Mary at 23.118–20, and concludes the pattern of descent and ascent begun with the triumphs in Canto 22.98–99 and 23.1–139 (see notes). "Triumphant vapor" refers to the blessed souls (see *Purg.* 11.6). SeeAdditional Note 4 and Martinez 1997.

73–75. My sight was following . . . deprived it of passing further: The ascent of the souls is the midpoint of the canto (lines 74–75), and the last time the pilgrim's vision is limited by distance. The "intervening medium" is the material of the heavenly sphere of the fixed stars, which, though diaphanous (transparent; see *Conv.* 2.6.9, 3.9.12), is so vast that the pilgrim's sight cannot attain to faraway objects; see 29.25–27 and note, 30.121–23.

76–96. Therefore my lady . . . turned to her smiling eyes: As Peter and the host ascend, Beatrice invites the pilgrim to look down again and consider how far he has moved while orbiting with the stars of Gemini; she then draws back his gaze and propels him to the next sphere (see 22.128–29, 133–53 and notes). The two downward looks frame the pilgrim's stay in the sphere of fixed stars.

76–87. Therefore my lady . . . more than a sign ahead: Looking down, the pilgrim's view takes in that portion of the "first clime" (a band extending across the habitable world between 16° and 23.5° north) that stretches from the Red Sea to the western verge of North Africa (see the map on p. 379). For the overstated extent in longitude of the Mediterranean, see 9.82–93 and note; see also *Inf.* 34.5 and note, and *Inferno* fig. 8. The pilgrim cannot see further east because the sun, rotating on the cusp of Taurus with Aries, is more than one sign away and west of the pilgrim's position in Gemini, so that for the inhabitants of the eastern shore of the Mediterranean the sun has set. For Ptolemy's formula that only one-fourth of the earth is habitable, see *Quaest.* 5, *Comm.* 2.5–6, and *Consol.* 2pr. 7.4.

79–81. Since the hour . . . from its middle to its end: The pilgrim first looked down from above the meridian of Jerusalem, and now does so from above the meridian of Cádiz (Gades) in Spain: thus he has turned 90° with Gemini,

meaning that he has completed one-fourth of a full daily revolution of the *primum mobile* and has been in Gemini for six hours; see 26.139–42 and note.

82–84. so that I saw beyond Gades . . . made herself a sweet burden: The pilgrim previously saw at a glance much of the small globe of Earth ("all of it from the mountains to the river mouths," 22.153). Now he sees the ocean to the southwest of Spain as the space Ulysses crossed, and the Mediterranean as the sea traversed by Jupiter when abducting Europa, the sister of Cadmus (see *Inf.* 25.97 and note) from the shore of Phoenicia (modern Lebanon).

84. where Europa made herself a sweet burden: See Statius, *Theb.* 1.115–17, where the abduction of Europa leads to the curse on Thebes: "When Cadmus, who had been ordered to seek . . . the sweet burden [*blanda iuvenci / pondera*] of the Sidonian bull" (the commentators suggest Ovid, *Met.* 2.869: "Unwitting whom she mounts, she sits upon the bull's back," echoed by Statius, *Theb.* 11.210–12). Statius's etiological fable suggests how Dante's examples might be read: Europa's abduction to Crete gives rise to Minos, Pasiphae and the labyrinth, as well as to sorrowful Thebes (*Inf.* 26.52–54, 32.58; *Purg.* 22.55–63 and notes), while Ulysses' voyage exemplifies transgressive exploration (*Inferno*, Additional Note 11). The pilgrim's downward gaze is thus historically and poetically retrospective and moralizing (cf. "mad / track," lines 82–83) as much as it is geographic.

85. And the site of this little threshing floor: Dante repeats his word for the earth as a place of strife [*aiuola*] (see 22.151 and note), based on the etiologies of Thebes and Crete implicit in the mention of Europa, and on the Troy story in the case of Ulysses.

88–96. My enamored mind . . . turned to her smiling eyes: The poet's mind here attends on Beatrice like a planet around the sun; compare Venus, now on one side of the sun, now the other, 8.1–12 and note (see also *Conv.* 2.2.1, 2.13.13–14).

97–148. And the power her glance . . . after the flower: The pilgrim and Beatrice enter the last physical sphere, the source of time in the spheres beneath. Beatrice laments the effects of cupidity on earth, but promises amendment.

98. uprooted me from Leda's lovely nest: Raped by Jupiter in the form of a swan, Leda bore two eggs, one of which hatched out the twins Castor and Pollux. This final instance of Beatrice drawing the pilgrim upward with her eyes is abrupt, almost violent (cf. Marsyas at 1.19–21 and note; see Additional Note 1).

100–120. Its closest and highest parts . . . manifest to you: Beatrice draws the pilgrim into the first moving sphere, or *primum mobile* ("first movable"). Invisible from earth but philosophically necessary (see note to lines 142–48), this sphere surrounds all the other spheres and the earth, and is contained by the Empyrean, or first heaven. The *primum mobile* transmits with its rapid movement God's influence undifferentiated, which the spheres of the fixed stars and the planets analyze, complicate with their specific influences, and pass on to the spheres below, finally to the earth (*Par.* 2.127–48, 13.61–66 with notes, and Additional Notes 10–13; also *Conv.* 2.3.6–11, 2.14.14–18). Time and change in the natural world are effects of the circling of the *primum mobile*, and in this sense the first sphere is the root or origin of time on earth (see lines 118–20, and Additional Note 3).

100–102. Its closest and its highest parts . . . chose to be my place: Dante juxtaposes the specificity of "Leda's nest" in the starry sphere with the impossibility of marking a distinct place in the *primum mobile*, which lacks stars and planets.

106–11. The nature of the world . . . begins as from its goal: Because all of Nature depends on the motion that the *primum mobile*, centered on the immobile earth, imparts to the spheres below it (*Conv.* 2.14.14–16; see 2.112–17, 28.70–78 and notes), Nature may be said to begin from the first movable sphere. The goal of Nature (in Dante's metaphor) is also this heaven; see *Conv.* 2.3.8–9, where Dante explains that the *primum mobile* is the fastest sphere, "because of the fervent desire that is in every part of that ninth heaven . . . to be joined with every part of that most divine quiet heaven [the Empyrean]." Dante's abstractions (and one simile) are as comprehensive as the principles they describe.

109–14. and this heaven . . . he who girds it understands: A uniform sphere that has neither orientation nor parts, the *primum mobile* is contained only by the Empyrean, the sphere of light and love whose "place" is the Mind of God (see 1.4, 22.61–67, 30.38–40 and notes), and only God, who encloses the Empyrean and the whole cosmos, can "understand" (but Dante's word also means "intends, foreordains"), that is to say, encompass with his mind, how he does so. The containment of the *primum mobile* is thus not spatial, but causal and formative; space begins with the *primum mobile* itself.

115–20. Its motion is not marked . . . can now be manifest to you: As ten is measured or factored by two, one-fifth of ten, and five, one-half of ten, all the motions of the eight inferior revolving heavens are comprehended and

measured by the single motion of the *primum mobile* (cf. 15.55–57). Jumping from an arithmetical to a horticultural metaphor, the first movable sphere is described as a spherical "pot" cradling the roots of the tree of time, whose boughs and leaves—phenomena that come to be in time (see note to lines, 127–35, and cf. 13.61–66 and notes)—spread through the spheres below (examples in lines 82–84). The roots are concealed (the *primum mobile* is invisible from earth) and the plant, time, grows downward from above: it is inverted (cf. 28.46–87, 55–57 and notes).

121–148. O cupidity . . . after the flower: The phenomena Beatrice cites in her lament to illustrate the dominance of greed—flooding, rainfall, flowering, growth, fruiting, maturation, darkening, spoilage—are natural processes influenced by the heavens, as are the actions of the spheres in Beatrice's prophecies of rectification (see *Inf.* 24.1–21 and note, and Additional Note 10). Beatrice's attack on cupidity may reflect the fact that in the *Convivio* Dante associates the *primum mobile* with moral philosophy (2.14.14–18).

121–26. O cupidity . . . healthy plums into blasted ones: Beatrice's apostrophe echoes previous cries (e.g. *Purg.* 20.10–14 and note); see *Consol.* 1.m.2.1–2: "Ah, in how steep depths submerged the mind becomes dull . . ." See *Mon.* 1.11.11–14 and 3.16.11 ("waves of seductive greed"), and see Additional Note 2.

In the next terzina, waters of cupidity rain down on the ripening plums of human action, which, though beginning as blossoms of good will on the tree, are ruined through being swollen and softened by moisture. Lines 121–23 anticipate 30.82–90, but with opposite meaning.

127–35. Faith and innocence . . . desires to see her buried: Flower and fruit allegories give place to three instances of cupidity corrupting children: boys lose their innocence before they grow beards; infants fast, but disregard dietary restrictions when able to enunciate; an infant is obedient, but wishes its mother dead when capable of speech. The examples range over human life from infancy to adolescence, for aging is an effect of the heavens as instruments of time (cf. Dante's account of the soul's journey from birth to death in *Convivio* 4; see Nardi 1966). Also implicitly referred to is the classical narrative of human decline, Ovid's four ages (gold, silver, bronze, and iron; see *Inf.* 14.94–120 and Additional Note 3; *Purg.* 14.37–39, 40–42 and note).

129. both flee before the cheeks are covered: In Ovid's account, the virtues flee as the iron age sets in: "In that age, all crimes of baser vein straight broke out, and modesty, truth, and loyalty fled . . ." (*Met.* 1.128–30); last to flee is Justice (*Met.* 1.149–50); and cf. *Purg.* 23.106–11 and note; see also 16.59 and note).

130–33. This one, while still a babbler . . . full command of speech: The examples focus on the cheeks (line 129) and tongue (line 131), where appetite is indulged and speech produced (cf. *Purg.* 24.37–39). The sin of Eve required the use of cheek and palate (*Par.* 13.38–39); see note to lines 137–38.

134–35. his mother . . . desires to see her buried. Another topic from Ovid's narrative of the iron age, "The son inquires prematurely into his father's years" (*Met.* 1.148). Compare Edmund in *King Lear* 1.2: "Sons, at perfect age, and fathers declined, the father should be as a ward to the son."

136–38. Thus their white skin . . . brings morning and leaves evening: Beatrice characterizes the human race as having a white skin that darkens, as most commentators take it, when faced with the sorceress Circe, "daughter of the sun" [*filia solis*] (*Met.* 14.33); and see *Consol.* 4.m.3.3–4 ("where the lovely goddess dwells / born from the seed of the Sun [*solis edita semine*]). See next note.

137–38. the first sight . . . brings morning and leaves evening: Some commentators take the "lovely daughter" (line 137) to be not Circe, but the "black but comely" bride of Canticle of Canticles 1.4, here standing for the human soul (Pertile 1991), or as an allegory of the corrupt Church (Chiavacci Leonardi). Although the Siren, the stuttering "ancient witch" of the pilgrim's second dream, remains unnamed, she is the principle represented by Circe (see *Purg.* 19.7–33 and note). She made Ulysses deviate from his path, just as the human family deviates at lines 145–47, after which his misdirected voyage began with departure from her (*Inf.* 26.90–93; and cf. *Purg.* 14.37–54, esp. 40–42 and note). "Stuttering" [*balba*] and "babbling" [*balbuziendo*], found nowhere elsewhere in the poem, also link the two episodes, as do the phrases "when his tongue is loosed" [*lingua sciolta*] at line 131, and "her tongue was loosed" [*sciolta / la lingua*] at *Purg.* 19.12–13.

139–48. You, so that it will not amaze . . . come after the flower: Lack of good government has led humans astray (cf. *Purg.* 16.85–129 and note; also *Ep.* 11.26), but the heavens will rectify matters. Metaphors of the ship of state and the sequence of flowering and fruiting now recur, the former implicit in the idea of guidance (line 140) and the latter already used *in malo* in Beatrice's tirade against cupidity (lines 124–26, "blooms . . . plums").

139–41. You, so that it will not amaze . . . goes astray: Neither emperor nor pope rules in Rome, as both offices had been vacant since the removal of the papacy to France in 1305 and the death of Henry VII in 1313 (see *Ep.* 11.5, 12, 21,

and *Par.* 19115-17, 30.133–38 and notes). For "going astray," cf. 9.131 (the florin as deviator of souls), 12.45 ("the straying people" [*popol disviato*]), and esp. *Purg.* 16.82 and *Par.* 18.126 ("all astray [*sviati*] behind the evil example"). See *Purg.* 29.118, of Phaethon, fulminated for his deviation, and Additional Note 7. For metaphors of guidance in political contexts, see *Purg.* 6.88–99, 14.143–51, and 19.61–63, and *Ep.* 6.3; and see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 4.

142–48. But before January . . . come after the flower: Beatrice dates the future correction in terms of the proper movement of the starry sphere (the precession of the equinoxes), which, in the reckoning of Alpetragius, relayed by Albertus Magnus, completes a cycle every thirty-six thousand years (the true figure is 26,500 years, and, as we now know, represents the period of the "wobble" of the earth's axis). Dante had calculated the age of Beatrice when he first saw her (*VN* 2.2) in terms of this same movement; it is invoked here because the *primum mobile* carries the primary or diurnal motion for the eight spheres below it, while the proper motion of the starry sphere is in the opposite direction (see *Conv.* 2.14.11–13). In *Conv.* 2.3.3, 5–6, Dante explains that because of this proper motion, which meant that the sphere of fixed stars had two motions rather than one, Ptolemy corrected Aristotle's system by postulating an invisible ninth sphere, the *primum mobile*, with only a single motion (see 26.37–39 and note).

142. But before January altogether unwinters itself: Because the solar, or tropical, year (the span of time required for the sun to return to the [moving] equinoctial point on the ecliptic) and the sidereal year (the period for the sphere of the fixed stars to return to that same point) differ in length by an amount equivalent to one day every 120 years, the location of the sun at the equinoxes (when day and night are the same length) and that of the stellar sphere, with its constellations, differed by one-hundredth of a degree; as a result, the true date of the equinoxes had slipped forward in the calendar, so that by Dante's day the true spring equinox fell on March 13, not on the conventional date of March 21. Without a correction, the date of the spring equinox would continue to slip forward until, seven thousand years after Dante's day, it would fall in December, leaving January "unwintered." See Kay 2003b.

144. these supernal spheres will radiate in such a way: In medieval astrology, cataclysmic events were thought to result from conjunctions of the superior planets (especially Jupiter and Saturn); such an event was expected in 1325 in the constellation of Gemini (Woody 1977; see also Kay 2003b). The rectification here expected is like the fall of Lucifer (line 27) and the Crucifixion (lines 31–36)

in that all three events perturb the cosmos (see *Inf.* 12.41–43 and note; for Lucifer, whose fall "disturbed what bears your foods" (*Par.* 29.51), that is, the earth, see *Inf.* 34.106–26 and note.

145–47. that the tempest . . . will sail aright: The parallel with a deviant Ulysses continues, as he turned his ship and crew to a disastrous path (see *Inf.* 26.124 and note) and was finally drowned (cf. *sommersi* in line 121). *Consol.* 4.m.3.2 refers to Ulysses's "ships wandering on the deep" [*vagas pelago rates*].

147. the fleet will sail aright: Because the Roman fleet [Lat. *classis*] wintered in the harbor of Ravenna, the seat of the Empire in Italy during the early Middle Ages, the port was named after it. That Beatrice intends an allusion to a restored Roman empire (cf. *Purg.* 33.43 and note) is suggested by the parallel with *Conv.* 4.pr.5.8, celebrating the universal peace imposed by Augustus, when "the ship of human society was speeding on an even course directly toward its proper port" (cf. 2.1–18 and notes; also *Conv.* 2.1.1, 4.28.3). See Additional Note 2.

CANTO 28

Poscia che 'ncontro a la vita presente
d'i miseri mortali aperse 'l vero
quella che 'mparadisa la mia mente,
come in lo specchio fiamma di doppiero
vede colui che se n'alluma retro
prima che l'abbia in vista o in pensiero,
e sé rivolge per veder se 'l vetro
li dice il vero, e vede ch' el s'accorda
con esso come nota con suo metro:
così la mia memoria si ricorda
ch'io feci, riguardando ne' belli occhi
onde a pigliarmi fece Amor la corda.
E com' io mi rivolsi e furon tocchi
li miei da ciò che pare in quel volume
quandunque nel suo giro ben s'adocchi,
un punto vidi che raggiava lume
acuto sì che 'l viso ch' elli affoca
chiuder conviensi per lo forte acume,
e quale stella par quinci più poca
parrebbe luna, locata con esso
come stella con stella si collòca.
Forse cotanto quanto pare appresso
alo cigner la luce che 'l dipigne,
quando 'l vapor che 'l porta più è spesso,
distante intorno al punto un cerchio d'igne
si girava sì ratto ch' avria vinto
quel moto che più tosto il mondo cigne,
e questo era d'un altro circumcinto,
e quel dal terzo, e'l terzo poi dal quarto,
dal quinto il quarto, e poi dal sesto il quinto.

CANTO 28

Primum mobile, continued: vision of point and circles—love and motion—the nine orders of angels

After the truth about the present life of
wretched mortals had been opened to me by
her who imparadises my mind,
as in a mirror the flame of a torch is seen
by one who is lit by it from behind, before he
sees it directly or in his thought,
and he turns to see whether the glass is
telling him the truth, and he sees that it
agrees with it as a note with its meter:
so my memory recalls that I did, looking
into the beautiful eyes where Love made the
cord to capture me.
And when I turned back, and my own
eyes were struck by what appears in that
turning, whenever one eyes its circuit carefully,
I saw a point that was radiating light so
sharp that any eye into which it shines must
close at its piercing intensity,
and whatever star from here seems
smallest, would seem a moon if placed near
it, as in the sky star is placed next to star.
Perhaps as closely as the halo seems to
gird the light that projects it, when the vapor
that carries it is thickest,
so around the point a circle of fire was
turning so swiftly that it would have surpassed
the motion that girds the world most swiftly,
and this was girt about by another, and that
by a third, and the third then by the fourth, by
the fifth the fourth, and then by the sixth the fifth.

Sopra seguiva il settimo, sì parto
già di larghezza che 'l messo di Iuno
intero a contenerlo sarebbe arto.
Così l'ottavo e 'l nono, e ciascheduno
più tardo si movea secondo ch'era
in numero distante più da l'uno,
e quello avea la fiamma più sincera
cui men distava la favilla pura,
credo però che più di lei s'invera.
La donna mia, che mi vedëa in cura
forte sospeso, disse: "Da quel punto
depende il Cielo e tutta la Natura.
Mira quel cerchio che più li è congiunto,
e sappi che 'l suo muovere è sì tosto
per l'affocato amore ond' elli è punto."
E io a lei: "Se 'l mondo fosse posto
con l'ordine ch' io veggio in quelle rote,
sazio m'avrebbe ciò che m'è proposto,
ma nel mondo sensibile si puote
veder le volte tanto più divine
quant' elle son dal centro più remote.
Onde, se 'l mio disir dee aver fine
in questo miro e angelico tempio
che solo amore e luce ha per confine,
udir convienmi ancor come l'essemplo
e l'essemplare non vanno d'un modo,
ché io per me indarno a ciò contemplo."
"Se li tuoi diti non sono a tal nodo
sufficïenti, non è maraviglia,
tanto per non tentare è fatto sodo!"
Così la donna mia; poi disse: "Piglia
quel ch' io ti dicerò, se vuo' saziarti,
e intorno da esso t'assottiglia.
Li cerchi corporai sono ampi e arti
secondo il più e 'l men de la virtute
che si distende per tutte lor parti.
Maggior bontà vuol far maggior salute,
maggior salute maggior corpo cape,
s'elli ha le parti igualmente compiute.

Beyond there followed the seventh, already
so expanded in circumference, that the messenger
of Juno would be too narrow to contain it.
Thus the eighth and the ninth, and each
moved more slowly as it was numerically
more distant from the one,
and that had the purest flame from which
the pure spark was least distant, I believe
because it more fully entruths itself therein.
My lady, who saw me entirely suspended
in attention, said: "From that point hang the
heavens and all Nature.
Inspect the circle that is most conjoined
with it, and know that its motion is so swift
because of the fiery love that pierces it."
And I to her: "If the world were arranged
with the order that I see in those wheels,
what is set before me would have satisfied me,
but in the visible world we see that the
vaults are more divine the further they are
from the center.
Therefore, if my desire is to reach its goal
in this marvelous angelic temple that has
only love and light as boundaries,
I must also hear why the pattern and the
copy do not go by the same measure, for by
myself in vain I contemplate that."
"If your fingers are not sufficient for such a
knot, it is no marvel, so tight has it become
with not being tried!"
So my lady; then she said: "Take what I
shall say, if you wish to be satisfied, and
make yourself subtle around it.
The corporeal circles are large or
constricted according as more and less
power extends through all their parts.
Greater goodness wishes to work greater
happiness; greater happiness is contained
by a larger body, if all its parts are equally perfected.

Dunque costui che tutto quanto rape
l'altro universo seco, corrisponde
al cerchio che più ama e che più sape;
per che, se tu a la virtù circonde
la tua misura, non a la parvenza
delle sustanze che t'appaion tonde,
tu vederai mirabil consequenza
di maggio a più e di minore a meno,
in ciascun cielo, a süa Intelligenza."
Come rimane splendido e sereno
l'emisperio de l'aere, quando soffia
Borea da quella guancia ond' è più leno
per che si purga e risolve la roffia
che pria turbava, sì che 'l ciel ne ride
con le bellezze d'ogne sua paroffia:
così fec' io poi che mi provide
la donna mia del suo risponder chiaro
e come stella in cielo il ver si vide.
E poi che le parole sue restaro,
non altrimenti ferro disfavilla
che bolle, come i cerchi sfavillaro.
L'incendio suo seguiva ogne scintilla,
ed eran tante che 'l numero loro
più che 'l doppiar de li scacchi s'inmilla.
Io sentiva osannar di coro in coro
al punto fisso che li tiene a li *ubi*,
e terrà sempre, ne' quai sempre fuoro.
E quella, che vedëa i pensieri dubi
ne la mia mente, disse: "I cerchi primi
t'hanno mostrato Serafi e Cherubi;
così veloci seguono i suoi vimi
per somigliarsi al punto quanto ponno,
e posson quanto a veder son soblimi.
Quelli altri amori che 'ntorno li vonno
si chiaman Troni del divino aspetto
per ché 'l primo ternaro terminonno,
e dei saper che tutti hanno diletto
quanto la sua veduta si profonda
nel Vero in che si queta ogne intelletto.

Therefore the circle that whirls the rest of
the universe along with it, corresponds to the
circle that loves most and knows most;
thus if you circumscribe your measure
with the power, not the apparent size, of the
circling substances that here appear to you.
you will see a marvelous correspondence
of greater to more and of smaller to less,
between each heaven and its Intelligence."
As the hemisphere of air is left brilliant
and clear when Boreas blows from his milder cheek,
so that he purges and dissolves the dregs
that previously clouded it, and the sky
laughs to us with its beauties from its every parish:
so I became when my lady provided me
with her clear reply and like a star in the sky
the truth became visible.
And when her words ceased, not
otherwise does boiling iron shoot sparks
than the circles sparkled.
Each spark followed its fiery circle, and
they were so many that their number enthousands
itself beyond the doubling of the chessboard.
I heard them hosanna from choir to choir
the fixed point that holds them, and will
always hold them, to the various *ubi* where
they have ever been.
And she, seeing the doubting thoughts in
my mind, said: "The first circles have shown
you Seraphim and Cherubim;
so rapidly do they follow their bonds, in order to
resemble the point as much as they can, and they
can to the degree that they are raised up to see.
Those other loves circling around them
are called Thrones of the divine appearance,
because they close the first triad,
and you are to know that they all feel delight
according to the depth their sight reaches in the
Truth where every intellect finds peace.

Quinci si può veder come si fonda
l'esser beato ne l'atto che vede,
non in quel ch'ama, che poscia seconda,
e del vedere è misura mercede,
che grazia partorisce e buona voglia:
così di grado in grado si procede.
L'altro ternaro che così germoglia
in questa primavera sempiterna
che notturno Arïete non dispoglia,
perpetüalmente '*Osanna*' sberna
con tre melode che suonano in tree
ordini di letizia onde s'interna.
In essa gerarchia son l'altre dee:
prima Dominazioni e poi Virtudi;
l'ordine terzo di Podestadi èe.
Poscia ne' due penultimi tripudi
Principati e Arcangeli si girano,
l'ultimo è tutto d'Angelici ludi.
Questi ordini di sù tutti s'ammirano,
e di giù vincon sì che verso Dio
tutti tirati sono e tutti tirano.
E Dïonisio con tanto disio
a contemplar questi ordini si mise
che li nomò e distinse com' io,
ma Gregorio di lui poi si divise,
onde, sì tosto come li occhi aperse
in questo ciel, di sé medesmo rise.
E se tanto secreto ver proferse
mortale in terrra, non voglio che t'ammiri,
ché chi 'l vide qua sù gliel discoperse,
con altro assai del ver di questi giri."

From this you can see how beatitude is
founded on the act of sight, not on that of
love, which follows after,
and the measure of sight is merit, born of
grace and good will: thus from degree to
degree we proceed.
The next triad that sprouts thus in this
sempiternal springtime that no nocturnal
Aries despoils
perpetually sings the spring song of
'*Hosanna*' with three melodies, sounding in
three orders of gladness that make it triple.
In this hierarchy are the next divinities:
first Dominations and then Virtues; the third
order is of Powers.
Then in the two penultimate tripudia,
Principalities and Archangels whirl; the last
is all of Angelic play.
These orders all gaze upward and bind
what is below, so that all are drawn, and all
draw, toward God.
And Dionysius put himself to contemplating
these orders with so much desire that he named and
distinguished them as I do,
but Gregory later departed from him, and
therefore, as soon as he opened his eyes
here in this heaven, he laughed at himself.
And if so secret a truth was set forth on earth
by a mortal, I would not have you marvel, for one
who saw it up here revealed it to him,
with much else of the truth about these circlings."

NOTES

1–139. After the truth . . . truth about these circlings: "Truth" is our translation of Dante's *ver(o)* [true], used as a substantive. Contini's classic discussion of this canto (1968) stresses its articulation around the appearances of this term, several times alliterated with *vetro* [glass] and/or forms of the verb *vedere* [to see], in lines 2, 8, 39, 87, 108, and 139. As Contini points out, nearing the end of the *Paradiso*, Dante intensifies his use of coinages (as in lines 3, 39, and 93), metaphors (lines 9, 56, 63), Latinisms (lines 25, 95, 100, 124), and rare words and forms (lines 27, 28, 68, 70, 81, 82, 84, 103, 105, 117, 118, 119, 126).

1–12. After the truth . . . cord to capture me: With a brief reference to 27.121–48 (Beatrice's denunciation of the false values and lack of leadership plaguing life on earth), the canto turns to the vision that will dominate this canto and the next. That it is seen first reflected in Beatrice's eyes (lines 4–12) is an important indication of her continuing role as mediator of the pilgrim's vision. The exact status we are meant to attribute to this symbolic representation, accommodated to the pilgrim's mode of understanding (like the rest of what he sees in the *Paradiso*), is never explicitly stated, but to suppose that the angels are visible to the pilgrim's physical eye would of course be absurd (cf. 4.28–63, with notes).

4–10. as in a mirror . . . recalls that I did: Beatrice's eyes are the mirror, and God and the angels are anticipated by the torches in the comparison. The motif of being lit from behind, and having to turn to face the light, is reminiscent of the description of Virgil's relation to his own vision: the light that showed him the divine child was behind his back, but he did not turn to see it directly (*Purg.* 22.64–72, with notes, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 14). Note the emphasis on the complex relation between reflected versus direct vision and thought in lines 5–7. In the parallel situation in 3.16–24, *pace* Beatrice (3.29–30) and Contini, the souls in the moon *are* mirrored, although not from behind the pilgrim: they are not "really" in the moon, merely "shown" there—"qui si mostraro" (4.37). As Contini 1968 points out, saint Paul's "We see now through a glass [mirror] in a dark manner [*per speculum in aenigmate*], but then face to face" (1 Cor. 13.12) is operative in all these passages.

4. torch: Dante's term, *doppiero* [torch formed of twisted candles, usually two or four], is obviously related to the theme of *doubling* (of images here, of the chessboard in lines 92–93).

7–10. and he turns to see . . . recalls that I did: The "truth" about the earthly situation described is implicitly carried over into the narrative situation (i.e., like the one lit by the torch, the pilgrim "turns to see whether the [mirror] is telling the *truth*," as if what he will see when he looks behind himself will be empirical "truth"; the sleight of hand is very skillful); the point is, of course, that the metaphysical or intellectual truth symbolized in the vision is a *higher truth* than the empirical, and the vision is a kind of projection from Beatrice's eyes (mirrors).

8–9. and he sees that it agrees with it: "He sees that it [the mirror] agrees with it [the truth]." Dante's pronouns ("el" and "esso") are both masculine singular: the reader of the Italian, too, must disentangle the references.

9. as a note with its meter: A performed note will (or should) agree with its metrical notation: the mirror is playing the same tune as "reality" (cf. lines 55–56, with note).

11–12. looking into the beautiful . . . cord to capture me: Although the viewer in the simile has already turned away from the mirror, these lines take us back to the (implied) beginning situation, before the pilgrim has looked away from Beatrice. (For the *dolce stil novo* mode of expression, cf. *Purg.* 32.1–16 and the "net" in line 6 there).

13–139. And when I turned back . . . truth about these circlings: The presentation of the vision (lines 16–36), followed by two levels of commentary by Beatrice: (1) the general principle of its structure, correlated with that of the visible universe (lines 40–87), followed by the fiery acknowledgement of their joy by the angels (lines 88–96); and (2) the identification of the nine orders of angels (lines 97–139).

13–15. And when I turned . . . its circuit carefully: The eyes of the mind are meant here, for the *primum mobile* ("that turning"), like the other heavenly spheres, is invisible. The reference to careless thought alludes to the fact that Aristotle, and Cicero after him, had thought the sphere of fixed stars (the eighth) to be the outermost; Ptolemy added a ninth, on the grounds that since the eighth sphere had a complex motion, an outer one with but a single motion was required, according to the Neoplatonic principle that the simple is always prior to the complex (see the notes on *Conv.* 2.3.5 by Vasoli and De Robertis; in *Conv.* 2.3.6 Dante outlines in more literal terms the procedure of observation and inference that corrected Aristotle's misconception). Dante's *volume* [Lat. from *volvere*, to turn: a thing turned] is a conspicuous Latinism as well as a pun.

16–39. I saw a point . . . entruths itself therein: The vision represents the nine orders of angels, the heavenly "Intelligences" that govern the spheres in their relation to the point, which of course represents God; in particularly condensed form, it presupposes and recapitulates the more detailed explanation given by Beatrice in 2.112–48 (see also 29.13–54, with notes). The elaborate care with which the nine circles are introduced one by one is itself an imitation in temporal sequence of the instantaneous but hierarchical radiation of creation (again, see the note to 2.106–48). That the enumeration ends by *returning* to the first circle and its relation to the central point is a little representation of the cosmic/narrative principle of the *epistrophè* [turning back] of all things to God, the basic structural feature of the *Comedy* itself.

16–21. I saw a point . . . placed next to star: Dante's astronomical analogy here is erroneous (cf. the note to 2.94–105), for the apparent size of a star is a function of its relative magnitude (the brighter the star appears, the larger it seems to the human eye—as well as to photosensitive film; the unstated standard of comparison is the light of the sun, of course—see 10.40–51, with notes). But his meaning is clear: the point represents infinite *intensity* as opposed to relative *extension* or *distension* (for Augustine's development of these concepts, see especially *Confessions* 11.29–31).

16. point: Dante's term *punto* appears repeatedly in this canto and the next, and frequently in the *Comedy* as a whole, always laden with significance (see especially *Inf.* 1.11, 5.132; *Par.* 33.94); cf. the note on lines 43–45.

22–27. Perhaps as closely . . . world most swiftly: The "motion that girds the world most swiftly" (cf. lines 71–72) is itself the *primum mobile*; that the first circle exceeds its rapidity is appropriate to the angelic order that must govern it, and it is directly related to the utter simplicity of this first communication of God's creative power, as yet undifferentiated, though containing all things virtually (see 2.112–17, with notes).

22–24. Perhaps as closely . . . is thickest: Whether Dante is referring here to the halo of the sun or the moon (cf. 10.67–69, where the twelve theologians surrounding the travelers are compared to the moon's halo) is unclear; we lean toward the latter because of its greater visibility and closeness to its center, as well as the earlier passage. In either case, it is striking that Dante introduces the idea of atmospheric moisture here, an impurity that obscures and refracts, and the momentary impression of dimming will be corrected in lines 25, 37–39, and especially in lines 79–87.

25–26. a circle of fire . . . so swiftly: The brightness and swiftness of the angelic circles represent both the intensity of their vision of God and their love and joy (as in 24.13–21, most recently, and as Beatrice will later explain).

28–36. and this was girt . . . more distant from the one: The eight circles following the first receive more summary treatment as their number and "spatial" distension diminishes their intensity. On the ambiguity of the term "the one," see the note to lines 34–36 below.

28–30. and this was girt . . . the sixth the fifth: The rhetorical figure so conspicuous in these lines was known in Greek as *klímax* [ladder], in Latin as *gradatio* [gradation, i.e., stepwise structure] (*Ad Herennium* 4.25; for a well-known example in English, see Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* 1.1–4), repeating the previous step each time. This again is a condensed rhetorical enactment of one of the fundamental governing principles of the *Comedy* (see our introduction to *Inferno*, pp. 18–20). The abandonment of *gradatio* in lines 31–36 helps convey the sense of lessening intensity.

31–33. already so expanded . . . to contain it: The "messenger of Juno" is of course the rainbow, whose maximum extension (a function of the angle of incidence of the sun's rays in relation to the eye) is about 45% of the field of vision; it always seems semicircular, seen from the ground, so Dante's complete circles fill the "sky" of his vision (he did not, of course, know that a rainbow seen from an airplane can in fact describe a complete circle).

34–36. Thus the eighth . . . distant from the one: The larger the ordinal number of the circle ("the more distant from [the] one"), the slower the circle moved. Note what one may call the number metaphysics here, inherent in the ambiguity of "the one": the central point is "the One" in strict Neoplatonic terms; circle number one participates in the transcendent principle of oneness more fully than those surrounding it (see Additional Note 10).

37–39. and that had . . . itself therein: Not only is the motion of the inner circles swifter as they are closer to the center, so are the purity and brightness of their "flames." The power as well as the beatitude of the angels results directly from the depth of their intellectual vision of God (cf. Additional Note 3), and the preeminence of the first circle (see previous note) is expressed also in the fact that, alone of all the circles it receives a total of three complete terzine (lines 22–27 and 37–39). "Inverarsi" [to entruth oneself, to enter or penetrate the truth] is another daring coinage of Dante's with *in-*; the first was *indiarsi*

[to engod oneself] in 4.28 (cf. line 93, with note). The pilgrim's final vision will be a gradual penetration into the light (33.82–120). One notes that there is no reference to the direction(s) of revolution of the angels; see below note to lines 127–29.

40–96. My lady, who saw me . . . they have ever been: The first stage of Beatrice's commentary on the pilgrim's vision, followed by the reaction of the angels.

40–42. My lady, who saw me . . . Heaven and all Nature: Beatrice's comment makes clear the significance of the central point; as the commentators observe, it adapts one of Aristotle's famous trenchant statements: "A tali principio tum caelum tum natura dependet . . . hoc est Deus" [From that principle (or: beginning) depend both the heavens and nature . . . it is God] (*Metaphysics* 12.7). Dante's vivid change from "principle" to "point" and his addition of "all" are recognized as vital in producing this formulation, even more powerfully condensed than Aristotle's. (For the heavenly bodies as constituting "Nature," see 8.106–14, with notes.)

43–45. Inspect the circle . . . love that pierces it: The pilgrim would seem to have already closely inspected the first circle (lines 37–39). Part of the function of these lines, as of lines 41–42, is once more to act out rhetorically the special status of both the point and the first circle. Note the *annominatio* with *punto* (here, "pierced").

46–87. If the world . . . the truth became visible: The pilgrim's puzzlement and Beatrice's explanation serve to make explicit and stress the importance of the turning inside-out constituted by the vision.

46–57. If the world . . . contemplate that: "These wheels" are the whirling fiery circles; Dante has frequently used the term of the heavenly spheres themselves. The statement of the pilgrim's puzzlement proceeds by defining the apparent difference between the visible world and this vision: "[T]he vaults [the heavenly spheres] are more divine the further they are from the center" [i.e., the earth].

52–54. Therefore, if my desire . . . light as boundaries: The pilgrim notes without help the peculiarity of the *primum mobile*, his and Beatrice's present "location": it is bounded only by the Empyrean ("love and light"). This awareness, along with his identification of the circles as the angels, makes his incomprehension all the more striking (see next note). The "desire" that is his "goal"

[*fine*] is clear intellectual understanding (which is of course itself symbolized in the vision). For the universe as a temple, cf. the passage quoted in the note to 22.133–53.

55–57. I must also hear . . . I contemplate that: Note the parallel with lines 4–9: a parallel analogy with music; in lines 8–9 a note agrees with its "meter" [*metro*]; here the copy does not go by the same "measure" or "tune" [*modo*] as the pattern: the analogy is a means to emphasize the *inversion*. The casting of the pilgrim as naively uncomprehending here ("in vain I contemplate that") is ponderous, however.

58–78. If your fingers . . . heaven and its Intelligence: Beatrice acknowledges the inherent difficulty of the question ("such a knot"), which she says has been neglected (line 60). Then she identifies extension as the principle expressing celestial power in the visible world (lines 61–69), and identifies the mover of the *primum mobile* (that "whirls the rest of the universe," lines 71–72; cf. line 27) with the smallest circle ("that loves most and knows most," line 72), and instructs the pilgrim how to discover the "marvelous correspondence" between the two structures (lines 73–78).

61–63. Take what I shall . . . yourself subtle around it: Beatrice's explanation of the relation between the visible and the spiritual patterns is something the poet's mind must revolve around to achieve sufficiently subtle understanding (cf. Additional Note 13); in so doing he will be imitating the angelic Intelligences revolving around the point. (Axiomatic for Dante is that the deepest knowledge of truth is a form of circularity.)

64–69. The corporeal circles . . . are equally perfected: *Extension* of power in the corporeal world: greater power produces "larger [circles, spheres]," lesser power "constricted [ones]" (lines 64–66). The principle is restated in lines 67–69, this time in relation to spiritual states and motives: greater goodness extends happiness spatially.

66, 69. extends through all their parts, if all its parts are equally perfected: Both lines referring to the heavenly bodies are stated axiomatically as facts (cf. 8.114 and 13.66–78). The *primum mobile* is entirely undifferentiated (27.97–102). Dante's *distende* [extends, spreads out] is closely related to his use of the same term in Statius's embryology (*Purg.* 25.58) of the development of the fetus.

70–78. Therefore the circle . . . heaven and its Intelligence: The first three lines establish the correspondence of the *primum mobile* and the first angelic

circle ("that most loves," etc.; see lines 37–39) and leave the pilgrim to carry out the rest. Note the continuing emphasis on the preeminence of the first circle (and cf. lines 98–114, with notes).

73–78. thus if you circumscribe . . . heaven and its Intelligence: If you consider ("circumscribe your measure" with) the power (not the "apparent size") of the angelic circles with the extension of the corporeal ones, the correspondence will be between greater [power] in the angels and larger [size] in the heavens, and between smaller [power] and lesser [extent]. Each heaven, of course, has one [order of] Intelligence[s] as its governor.

79–87. As the hemisphere . . . truth became visible: The effect on the pilgrim of Beatrice's explanation: expressed in terms of the clearing of the sky and the brilliant appearance of the stars (all the imagery of the canto has been drawn from meteorology and astronomy). Dante refers to the traditional representations, in maps and elsewhere, of the winds as heads blowing from puffed cheeks. Boreas is the wind from the north, milder when blowing from the northwest (the milder side—cheek—as opposed to due north or northeast); the northwest wind, then, purges and dissolves the impurities and haze that obscure the view of the stars. The "hemisphere of air" refers to all the atmosphere visible above the horizon (the hemisphere below the horizon lies over uninhabited territories). This is the final sweeping away of the haze introduced in lines 22–24.

85–87. so I became . . . truth became visible: Note the parallel with the comparison of the divine point with a star (lines 16–21).

88–96. And when her words . . . where they have ever been: The angelic circles, imagined to have overheard Beatrice's words (as in lines 94–95, the pilgrim can hear their singing), shoot sparks in a fireworks display of joyous approval.

91. Each spark followed its fiery circle: That is, each spark (an angel) described visibly and more brightly an arc of the circle of its angelic order.

92–93. they were so many . . . doubling of the chessboard: Medieval conceptions of the number of the angels rest on biblical passages: "A thousand thousand were ministering to [God], and ten times a hundred thousand stood before him" (Daniel 7.10; cf. Apoc. 5.11). Aquinas, citing the Pseudo-Dionysius, views their number as "transcending any corporeal plurality" (*ST* 1a q. 112 a. 4). In *Conv.* 2.5.5, Dante says that they are "almost numberless." Dante refers to

beginning with 1 on the first square of the chessboard and doubling it with each successive double on the rest of the squares; on the last square the sum is 2^{63} (an enormous figure, compact notation for which was long unavailable: 9.22×10^{18}); but the number of grains of wheat said to have been promised to the inventor of chess by the naively confident Persian king was the *sum* of all the doubles, i.e., 2^0 (1) + 2^1 (2)+ 2^2 (4)+ 2^3 (8)+ . . . 2^{63}; the king, naturally, was bankrupted; in either version, the number of the angels checkmates human calculation. *Inmillarsi* [to enthousand oneself] is another of Dante's coinages with *in-*, parallel in form to *incinquarsi* [to enfive oneself] (9.40; cf. 13. 57, and cf. lines 37–39, with note).

94–96. I heard them hosanna . . . they have ever been: Dante has made a verb *osannare* of the acclamation hosanna [Hebrew: rejoice] (cf. Purg. 11.11, Par. 7.1–3, with notes), whose direct object is "the fixed point" (line 95). The idea of the audibility of the angels' singing is in the OT prophets; perhaps most impressive in Is. 6.3, where the seraphim cry to each other: "Holy, holy, holy the Lord God of hosts, all the earth is filled with his glory," from which the Sanctus of the Mass is derived. That the circles, as different choirs, answer each other singing also probably derives from Is. 6.3: "And each [of the Seraphim] called out to each."

95–96. the fixed point . . . they have ever been: The infinitely intense point is the origin of all space and time; on its fixity depends that of all else. God's grace holds the angels to their fixed locations, their *ubi* [where] (which Dante treats as a plural), against all possibility of change, as he [God] will always do (cf. 29.58–63).

97–139. And she, seeing . . . truth about these circlings: The rest of the canto is devoted to an exposition of the names and grades of the angels, derived from *On the Celestial Hierarchy*, believed written by the Athenian Dionysius the Areopagite, converted by saint Paul (Acts 17.14). He was supposed to have evangelized France (thus saint Denis), and to have been martyred on the Mons Martyrum (Montmartre); it and the other very influential Pseudo-Dionysian works were in fact written in the fifth or sixth century by a Christian follower of Proclus (d. 485), the last major pagan Neoplatonist. In *Convivio* 2, following Gregory the Great on the angels (*Moralia in Hiob* 33), Dante had asserted that "Voi ch'intendendo il terzo ciel movete" (see 8.34–39, with notes), addressed to the movers of the third heaven, referred to the angelic order of the Thrones (see 28.104). The "error" was silently corrected in 8.34–37; now its source is identified. (*Convivio* 2 gives a *terminus post quem* for Dante's reading

of the Pseudo-Dionysius; Dante must have read him in northeastern Italy; see Pertusi 1966.)

98–129. The first circles . . . draw, toward God: Beatrice's next account of the angelic hierarchy devotes six terzine to the first triad (lines 98–114), three to the second (lines 115–23), one to the third (lines 124–26), and concludes with one terzina stressing the unity among all three triads (lines 127–29); see next note.

98–113. The first circles . . . grace and good will: Beatrice's account of the first triad has two parts: (1) identification of its three orders; and (2) commentary on the structure of their beatitude. Like the first angelic circle (cf. the note to lines 37–39), the first triad receives much fuller exposition than the others.

98–105. The first circles . . . close the first triad: The preeminence of the Seraphim and Cherubim was established in the OT prophetic texts (especially Isaiah and Ezekiel); in 4.28 "that [Seraph] that most engods itself"—the very highest of the highest order—is a synecdoche for all the angels.

100–102. so rapidly . . . raised up to see: "Per somigliare al punto," which we translate "in order to resemble the point," has been taken by some to mean "because they resemble the point," but the dynamic sense of the angels' striving desire seems far preferable (this reading is also supported by line 102; see below).

100. so rapidly do they follow their bonds: Their "bonds" ([*vimi*, from Lat. *vimen*]; cf. 29. 36) are the circles, as close as possible to the point, so called because the angels are held in them by God, as explained in lines 101–2.

102. they can to the degree . . . raised up to see: They *can* resemble the point, to the extent that God lifts them up, illuminates them (beyond their inherent ability) to intuit him (this point is further developed in lines 109–13). Throughout this passage "sight" and other terms of seeing refer to intellectual vision.

103–5. Those other loves . . . close the first triad: The idea of *three triads* of angels (based on the Pseudo-Dionysius) is of course overtly Trinitarian; earlier, Augustine had shown at great length, in his treatise *De Trinitate* [On the Trinity], how all creation reveals fundamental structures of three, the "mark" of the triune Creator. Proclus argued that the number three was the fundamental principle of the stability of any structure, a view that deeply influenced the Pseudo-Dionysius.

106–14. and you are to know . . . degree we proceed: This passage, parallel to Solomon's account of the structure of beatitude (14.37–60) explains the principle of the primacy of intellect in the beatitude of the angels (cf. 29.61–66), which is exactly parallel to that of human beings (except that the angels will not have bodies).

106–8. they all feel delight . . . intellect finds peace: The angels' beatitude depends on the depth to which their intellect penetrates into the infinite intellect of God. Note the parallel with line 102 ("quanto" [by how much] occupies the same position in both lines 102 and 107), where the emphasis is upon the grace that lifts them. Compare 4.124–32, especially the analogy with the settling of a wild animal into its lair. The motivation of the human mind is the same as that of the angelic.

109–13. From this you can . . . grace and good will: Two terzinas, the first baldly stating the principle of the primacy of the intellect, the second the circular structure of mutual reinforcement of intellect and will.

109–11. From this you can . . . follows after: This theme was presupposed in lines 37–39, and it has been a fundamental recurrent theme of the entire poem, beginning with *Inf.* 1.30 (on which see our note). For one to love an object, the intellect must focus on it (cf. *Purg.* 18.19–75, with notes).

112–14. and the measure . . . degree we proceed: The *merit* of individual angels, as of human beings, determines, along with their desire and divine grace, the depth of the vision each has of God. Thus, joining with grace, increasing vision begets increasing delight and love in a circling that reaches a degree of maximum intensity in which it perpetually generates itself (this idea will be acted out in the final vision in Canto 33).

114. thus from degree to degree we proceed: This line both refers to what precedes and serves as a transition to what follows. We *proceed* stepwise in our analysis of beatitude, mirroring the generation of the angels themselves (there will be more exploration of this theme in Canto 29); the stepwise yet instantaneous procession, or radiation, of the angels, which quickly becomes the turning back (*epistrophè*) of the angels toward God and the permanent stability seen in the pilgrim's vision (lines 95–96).

115–23. The next triad . . . is of Powers: The three terzine on the second triad introduce the imagery of the "sempiternal springtime," in which the nine angelic orders perpetually sprout and blossom (a brief anticipation of the

celestial rose of Cantos 30–33), and which they celebrate with the "spring song" of "*Hosanna*" (cf. lines 94–96).

117. that no nocturnal Aries despoils: The sun enters Libra at the autumnal equinox, when its diametrical opposite, the sign Aries, is in the sky at night (cf. the similar, though less contorted, turn of expression, also involving Libra [the Scales], in *Purg.* 2.1–6). Dante's "dispoglia" (it means both "despoils" and "undresses") refers to the loss of leaves by trees and other plants that begins in autumn; both senses of the word are operative here, for autumn both "despoils" (robs) and "undresses" them. See the parallel play in *Inf.* 3.112–14: in autumn the tree loses its raiment, which becomes spoils [*spoglie*].

118–20. perpetually sings . . . make it triple: This is the only passage in Dante's works that explicitly and unambiguously refers to true musical polyphony, the combining of different, simultaneously moving melodies.

121. the next divinities: Dante's word is *dee* [literally, goddesses]: all the names of the angelic orders in this second triad are feminine (all in the first are masculine; in the third, two are masculine). Compare 5.123, "believe them as if gods [*dii*]," of the blessed souls. To call the angels divinities credits their immediate relation to God and their power over the rest of creation, but we are not to forget that they, too, are created beings. Note the precious rhymes on *-ee* in hiatus (lines 119, 121, 123).

124–26. Then in the two . . . Angelic play: One terzina on the lowest triad. *Tripudia* (the plural of Lat. *tripudium* [from *tres*, three + *pedes*, feet]) refers to the energetic cultic dance of the Roman Salic priests (*Ab urbe cond.* 1.20.4), in triple rhythm (again, Trinitarian emphasis).

127–29. These orders . . . all draw, toward God: Recapitulating and summing up (note the three verbs *gaze*, *bind*, *draw*), with the fundamental Neoplatonic emphasis on the two principles of procession and return; for similar emphasis, in relation to the angelic governing of the sublunar (i.e., the descent of their power), see 2.121–23: "These organs of the world [the heavenly spheres] thus descend . . . by degrees, for they take from above and fashion below" (cf. 2.136).

The angels are the spiritual/intellectual governors of the spheres, radically distinct from the various motions of the spheres: from their vision of the Same all the angels take their government of the Other; it would seem that all follow, in this symbolic motion, that of the highest order (see also Additional Note 3).

130–39. And Dionysius . . . about these circlings: On the divergence between the Pseudo-Dionysius and Gregory the Great (cf. the note to lines 97–139). Dante was apparently unaware that Gregory had cited and accepted the Pseudo-Dionysius's account of the angelic orders in his later *Homiliae in Lucam* (15.1–10); see Pertusi 1966.

130–35. And Dionysius . . . laughed at himself: Dante's regarding the Pseudo-Dionysius's authority as superior to Pope Gregory's is typical of his period (although Aquinas was able to show that the *Liber de causis* derived from Proclus, he failed to see the Pseudo-Dionysius's derivation from the same source and cites him as an authority more than sixteen hundred times). The beginnings of a skeptical historical view can be seen in Abelard's *Historia calamitatum*, which relates how he earned the enduring hostility of the monks of the royal abbey of saint Denis (Suger's abbey, north of Paris), by showing that it was historically impossible for the saint Denis who evangelized Gaul to have been the Areopagite who had been converted by saint Paul, as they had always believed him to be; it was not until 1476, however, that a serious critique of the attribution was mounted by Lorenzo Valla, followed by Erasmus and Luther. The Catholic Church continued to accept it well into the seventeenth century (O'Daly 1981).

134–35. as soon as he . . . laughed at himself: The suggestion that the soul of Gregory the Great passed through the *primum mobile* on its way to Heaven also suggests that there may be a route to Heaven that all souls take, including the pilgrim; Dante may have in mind the pagan Neoplatonic belief that both in descending from and returning to the stars the soul passes through each of the planets, as well as certain stargates (see *Commentarii* 1.12, Rabuse 1958, Rabuse 1970). Now the *epistrophè* is human.

136–39. And if so secret . . . about these circlings: Dante supposes that Dionysius the Areopagite learned about the angels directly from saint Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 12.2–4).

CANTO 29

Quando ambedue li figli di Latona,
coperti del Montone e de la Libra,
fanno de l'orizzonte insieme zona,
quant' è dal punto che 'l cenìt i 'nlibra
infin che l'uno e l'altro da quel cinto,
cambiando emisperio, si dilibra:
tanto, col volto di riso dipinto,
si tacque Bëatrice, riguardando
fiso nel punto che m'avëa vinto.
Poi cominciò: "Io dico, e non dimando
quel che tu vuoli udir, perch' io l'ho visto
là 've s'appunta ogne *ubi* e ogne *quando*.
Non per aver a sé di bene acquisto,
ch' esser non può, ma perché suo splendore
potesse, risplendendo, dir: '*Subsisto*,'
in sua etternità di tempo fore,
fuor d'ogne altro comprender, come i piacque
s'aperse in nuovi amori l'etterno Amore.
Né prima quasi torpente si giacque,
ché né prima né poscia procedette
lo discorrer di Dio sovra quest' acque.
Forma e materia congiunte e purette
usciro ad esser che non avia fallo,
come d'arco tricordo tre saette.
E come in vetro, in ambra o in cristallo
raggio resplende sì che dal venire
a l'esser tutto non è intervallo:
così 'l triforme effetto del suo Sire
ne l'esser suo raggiò insieme tutto
sanza distinzïone in essordire.

CANTO 29

Primum mobile, continued: God's immediate creations: the angels, matter, and the heavens—fall of the rebel angels—denunciation of theological folly

When both Latona's children, covered by the
Ram and by the Scales, together make the
horizon their girdle,
as long a time as from the point when the
zenith has them balanced until both slide from
equilibrium on that belt, changing hemispheres:
so long, her face covered with a smile, was
Beatrice silent, gazing fixedly into the point that
had vanquished me.
Then she began: "I speak without asking
what you wish to hear, for I have seen it where
every *ubi* and every *quando* converge.
Not to acquire any good for himself, which
cannot be, but that his splendor, shining back to
him, might say: '*Subsisto*,'
in his eternity, outside of time, beyond all
other containment, as it pleased him, the eternal
Love opened himself out into other loves.
Nor previously did he lie as if torpid, for
neither earlier nor later did God's moving over
these waters come forth.
Form and matter, both joined and entirely
pure, came forth into unflawed being, like three
arrows from a bow with three strings.
And as into glass, amber, or crystal a ray
shines so that between its coming and its full
presence there is no interval:
so the triform effect of its Sire radiated forth
into its being all at once, without distinction of
beginning.

Concreato fu ordine e costrutto
a le sustanze, e quelle furon cima
nel mondo in che puro atto fu prodotto;
pura potenza tenne la parte ima;
nel mezzo strinse potenza con atto
tal vime che già mai non si divima.
Ieronimo vi scrisse lungo tratto
di secoli de li angeli creati,
anzi che l'altro mondo fosse fatto,
ma questo vero è scritto in molti lati
da li scrittor de lo Spirito Santo,
e tu te n'avvedrai se bene agguati,
e anche la ragione il vede alquanto,
che non concederebbe che ' motori
sanza sua perfezion fosser cotanto.
Or sai tu dove e quando questi amori
furon creati e come, sì che spenti
nel tuo disio già son tre ardori.
Né giugneriesi numerando al venti
sì tosto come de li angeli parte
turbò 'l suggetto d'i vostri alimenti.
L'altra rimase, e cominciò quest' arte
che tu discerni, con tanto diletto
che mai da circüir non si diparte.
Principio del cader fu il maladetto
superbir di colui che tu vedesti
da tutti i pesi del mondo costretto.
Quelli che vedi qui furon modesti
a riconoscer sé da la Bontate
che li avea fatti a tanto intender presti,
per che le viste lor furo essaltate
con grazia illuminante e con lor merto,
sì c' hanno ferma e piena volontate,
e non voglio che dubbi, ma sia certo
che ricever la grazia è meritorio
secondo che l'affetto l'è aperto.
Omai dintorno a questo consistorio
puoi contemplare assai, se le parole
mie son ricolte, sanz' altro aiutorio.

Order and structure were created together in the substances, and those were the summit of the world in whom pure act was produced;
pure potentiality held the lowest part; in the middle, potentiality and act were united by such a bond that it will never be unstrung.
Jerome wrote for you of a long tract of centuries, after the creation of the angels, before the rest of the world was made,
but this truth is written on many pages by the writers of the Holy Spirit, and you will perceive it if you look carefully,
and even reason sees something of it, for it could not grant that the Movers could be so long without their perfection.
Now you know where and when these loves were created, and how, so that three fires have already been extinguished in your desire.
Nor would one reach twenty, counting, as quickly as a part of the angels disturbed what bears your foods.
The other part remained, and they began this art that you discern, with so much delight that they never leave off circling.
The origin of the fall was the cursèd pride of him whom you saw held down by all the weights of the world.
Those you see here were modest in acknowledging their origin in the Goodness that had made them capable of seeing so much,
and therefore their sight was exalted by illuminating grace and by their merit, so that their will is fixed and full,
and I would not have you doubt, but be certain that to receive grace is meritorious according as the affect is open to it.
Now around this consistory there is much for you to contemplate, if my words have been gathered up, without other assistance.

Ma perché 'n terra per le vostre scole
si legge che l'angelica natura
è tal che 'ntende e si ricorda e vole,
ancor dirò, perché tu veggi pura
la verità che là giù si confonde,
equivocando in sì fatta lettura.
Queste sustanze, poi che fur gioconde
de la faccia di Dio, non volser viso
da essa, da cui nulla si nasconde;
però non hanno vedere interciso
da novo obietto, e però non bisogna
rememorar per concetto diviso:
sì che là giù non dormendo si sogna,
credendo e non credendo dicer vero,
ma ne l'uno è più colpa e più vergogna.
Voi non andate giù per un sentiero
filosofando, tanto vi trasporta
l'amor de l'apparenza e 'l suo pensiero.
E ancor questo qua sù si comporta
con men disdegno che quando è posposta
la divina Scrittura o quando è torta.
Non vi si pensa quanto sangue costa
seminarla nel mondo e quanto piace
chi umilmente con essa s'accosta.
Per apparer ciascun s'ingegna e face
sue invenzioni, e quelle son trascorse
da' predicanti, e 'l Vangelo si tace.
Un dice che la luna si ritorse
ne la passion di Cristo e s'interpuose,
per che 'l lume del sol giù non si porse,
e mente, ché la luce si nascose
da sé: però a li Spani e a l'Indi,
come a' Giudei, tale eclissi rispuose.
Non ha Fiorenza tanti Lapi e Bindi
quante sì fatte favole per anno
in pergamo si gridan quinci e quindi,
sì che le pecorelle, che non sanno,
tornan del pasco pasciute di vento,
e non le scusa non veder lo danno.

But because on earth in your schools they
teach that the angelic nature is such that it
knows and remembers and wills,
I will speak further, that you may see the pure
truth that is confused down below, in their
equivocating readings.
These substances, as soon as they were
made joyous by the face of God, from which
nothing is hidden, have not turned their sight from it;
therefore their sight is never interrupted by a
new object, and therefore they have no need to
remember through divided concepts:
so that down there, not asleep, they dream,
believing and not believing that they speak the truth,
but in the latter there is more guilt and more shame.
You do not follow one path in philosophizing
down there, the love of show so transports you,
and the thought of it.
But still, this is endured up here with less
anger than when Holy Scripture is disregarded
or when it is distorted.
They do not consider down there how much
blood it costs to sow it in the world and how
pleasing is one who approaches it humbly.
For show each exerts his wit and makes his
inventions, and those are spread by the
preachers, who are silent about the Gospel.
One says the moon turned back during
Christ's passion and interposed itself so that the
light of the sun could not reach the earth,
and he lies, for the light hid itself of its own accord:
for this reason the so-called eclipse was seen by the
Spaniards and the Indians, as well as by the Jews.
Florence has not so many Lapos and Bindos
as fables of this kind are cried in a year from the
pulpit on this side and on that,
so that the little sheep, who do not know,
return from pasture fed on wind, but their not
seeing the damage does not excuse them.

Non disse Cristo al suo primo convento: 109
'Andate, e predicate al mondo ciance,'
ma diede lor verace fondamento,
e quel tanto sonò ne le sue guance, 112
sì ch' a pugnar per accender la fede
de l'Evangelio fero scudo e lance.
Ora si va con motti e con iscede 115
a predicare, e pur che ben si rida
gonfia il cappuccio e più non si richiede.
Ma tale uccel nel becchetto s'annida 118
che, se 'l vulgo il vedesse, vederebbe
la perdonanza di ch' el si confida,
per cui tanta stoltezza in terra crebbe 121
che, sanza prova d'alcun testimonio.
ad ogne promession si correrrebbe.
Di questo ingrassa il porco sant' Antonio, 124
e altri assai che sono ancor più porci,
pagando di moneta sanza conio.
Ma perché siam digressi assai, ritorci 127
li occhi oramai verso la diritta strada,
sì che la via col tempo si raccorci.
Questa natura sì oltre s'ingrada 130
in numero che mai non fu loquela
né concetto mortal che tanto vada,
e se tu guardi quel che si revela 133
per Danïèl, vedrai che 'n sue migliaia
determinato numero si cela.
La prima Luce, che tutta la raia, 136
per tanti modi in essa si recepe
quanti son li splendori a chi s'appaia.
Onde, però che a l'atto che concepe 139
segue l'affetto, d'amar la dolcezza
diversamente in essa ferve e tepe.
Vedi l'eccelso omai e la larghezza 142
de l'etterno Valor, poscia che tanti
speculi fatti s'ha in che si spezza,
uno manendo in sé come davanti." 145

Christ did not say to his first followers: 'Go
and preach trifles to the world,' but gave them a
true foundation,
and that alone sounded from their cheeks, so
that, as they fought to kindle the faith, the
Gospel became their shield and lance.
Now they go with jests and flourishes to
preach, and as long as there is much laughter
the cowl puffs up and no more is asked.
But such a bird is nesting in the beak of the
hood, that if the crowd saw it, they would see
also the pardon they rely on,
by which so much folly has grown in the world
that, without proof of any testimony, they would
run after any promise.
On this Saint Anthony's pig fattens, and many
others even more piggish, paying in coin with no
imprint.
But because we have digressed far, turn your
eyes back now to the straight way, so that our
path may be shortened to fit our time.
This nature steps so far beyond in number
that there was never speech or mortal concept
to go so far,
and if you look at what Daniel reveals, you
will see that in his thousands a determinate
number is hidden.
The first Light, which irradiates them all, is
received in as many different modes by them as
there are splendors to which it appears.
Thus, since affect follows the act of knowing, the
sweetness of love in them is more and less fiery.
Now you see the height and breadth of the
eternal Worth, since it has made so many
mirrors in which it divides itself,
remaining One in itself as before."

NOTES

1–145. When both Latona's . . . in itself as before: After an introductory pause (lines 1–9), the entire canto is occupied by Beatrice's disquisition, in four parts, clearly demarcated from each other by transitional passages: (1) on God's instantaneous creation of the universe, including the angels (lines 10–48); (2) on the fall of the rebel angels and the subsequent status of the loyal angels (lines 49–69); (3) condemnation of the current fashions in theology and preaching (lines 70–126); and (4) return to God and the creation of the angels (lines 127–45).

1–9. When both Latona's . . . had vanquished me: After her identification of the nine orders of angels, Beatrice pauses briefly, gazing at the central point of the vision; the length of her pause is expressed by an elaborate simile: when the sun and the moon ("Latona's children"), directly opposite each other in east and west—one in Aries, one in Libra—seem immobile, held in equilibrium in a balance—a *statera*, like the traditional symbol of the sign Libra—imagined as having its fulcrum at the zenith (the point directly over the head of the observer). (Another view—its modern exponent has been Manfred Porena—takes the interval as referring to both luminaries moving entirely clear of the horizon, taking "si dilibra" (line 6) as meaning *si libera* [frees itself], which involves ignoring the strongly marked *annominatio* between *i 'nlibra* (line 4) [holds them in balance] and *si dilibra* [thus: leaves equilibrium], and forgetting that the moon would be freed some time before the larger sun; for this and other reasons we reject it.)

Drawing attention away from the vision of the point and the nine circles, this grandiose imagining leaves interpretation entirely to the reader: which luminary is where? Which rising, which setting? Is the season spring (sun in Aries) or autumn (sun in Libra)? Most commentators choose among these possibilities without considering what Dante's reasons may have been for being indeterminate (see Nardi 1956b).

1–3. When both Latona's . . . horizon their girdle: Latona was the mother, by Zeus, of Apollo and Diana, sun and moon. The horizon is imagined as bisecting both luminaries. (Lat. *zona* [belt, girdle] is frequently used by the Roman poets to refer to the girl's belt or girdle that is loosed in love.)

2. covered by the Ram and by the Scales: "Covered by" here means "beneath,"[1] the zodiacal signs (in the sphere of fixed stars) being far above the luminaries and other planets.

7–9. so long, her face . . . had vanquished me: Beatrice stares at the point, gathering from it both her knowledge of the pilgrim's questions (lines 11–12) and perhaps the plan of her ensuing discourse. Chiavacci Leonardi suggests that the solemn pause helps prepare the greater depth and solemnity of this canto as compared with the previous one.

4, 9, 12. point, point, converge: In line 4 *punto* is used of a moment of time; in line 9 of the brilliant, nondimensional point representing God; in line 12 the term is included in *s'appunta* [converges], said of both space (*ubi* [where], as in line 9 and 28.16) and time (*quando* [when], as in line 4 and in *Inf.* 5.132; cf. the note on 28.95–96).

9. the point that had vanquished me: A conspicuous echo of *Inf.* 5.132: "Solo un punto fu quel che ci vinse" [one point alone was the one that vanquished us], and the even more conspicuous echo in 33.94 (the point being that they chose the wrong "point").

10–48. Then she began . . . extinguished in your desire: Part 1 of Beatrice's disquisition: God's instantaneous creation of the universe, preceded by a brief introduction (lines 10–12) concerning her having seen the pilgrim's question in her direct contemplation of God.

10–12. I speak without asking . . . every *quando* converge: This is God, of course, outside of both space and time (lines 16–21; cf. the note to lines 56–57).

13–48. Not to acquire . . . extinguished in your desire: The first phase of Beatrice's exposition is the most explicit statement in the poem of Dante's position regarding God's creation of the cosmos, strongly Neoplatonic in its references to "light metaphysics"; it gathers and gives a final summary of the statements scattered through this cantica (2.112–48, 7.124–71, 13.52–87). It has three parts: (1) the final cause of creation—God's desire to share his beatitude (lines 13–21); (2) the order and structure of the instantaneously radiated creation (lines 22–36); and (3) a refutation of saint Jerome's theory of the earlier creation of the angels (lines 37–45); followed by a conclusion (lines 46–48).

The brilliantly concise formulations of this passage represent Dante's effort to reconcile a Neoplatonic conception of the radiation or emanation of the world from God (treated in the Arabic tradition—Avicenna, Averroës—as eternal and essentially automatic) with the Judeo-Christian idea of a willed creation out of nothing (see also Additional Note 11). Dante draws throughout

on both the Platonic tradition and the biblical account (Genesis 1, especially verses 1–5):

> In the beginning God created heaven and earth. And the earth was void and empty; and darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was borne over the waters. And God said: Be light made. And light was made. And God saw the light, that it was good, and he divided the light from the darkness. And he called the light Day, and the darkness Night. And there was evening and morning one day.

The interpretation of the biblical account was the subject of endless discussion among both Jews and Christians (see *In principio* 1973). "In the beginning" [*in principio*] was interpreted as meaning both "before time" (from eternity) and "in his beginning," meaning "in his Wisdom" (or "in the Logos" by the jewish platouist philo or by the christians following John 1.3). "Heaven" was often taken to refer to the angels, "earth" to the rest of creation (Augustine; "light" was later taken by Augustine to mean the angels). "Darkness was on the face of the deep and the Spirit of God was borne over the waters" was often taken to refer to the instant before the illumination of the loyal angels and the fall of the rebels. Ecclus. 18.1, "He who lives eternally created all things at once" [*Qui vivit in aeternum creavit omnia simul*] was often cited to settle such issues.

13–15. Not to acquire . . . might say "Subsisto" [I exist]: God's motive was to share his beatitude ("his splendor") with beings possessing bright ("shining back to him") self-awareness ("I exist"). Note the parallel with *Par.* 1.1–3 (God's glory "penetrates the universe" precisely because, as set forth in the present passage, the universe is carried or radiated by God (cf. also *Ep.* 13, to Can Grande, 61, 64).

13–14. Not to acquire . . . which cannot be: Being infinite and infinitely good, God gains nothing by creating the world. The idea of the Creator as motivated entirely by unselfish love and desire to share his beatitude was explicit in the Platonic tradition from Plato on, and the Platonic formulas entered the Christian tradition early. See *Timaeus* 29D:

> Let us, then, state for what reason becoming and this universe were framed by him who framed them. He was good; and in the good no jealousy in any matter can ever arise. So, being without jealousy, he desired that all things should come as near as possible to being lila himself.

Compare 7.64–66, "O qui perpetua," lines 4 and 6 (pp. 686–87). The commentators cite *ST* 1a q. 50 a.1, *CG* 2.46 (these, too, are essentially Platonic formulations).

16–21. in his eternity . . . these waters came forth: Time and space did not exist until they were created (see the notes to lines 17 and 31–36). God exists beyond time and space, and, eternity being an unchanging fullness of possession of being, the idea of God "lying torpid" before creating time has no meaning. One of Plato's key ideas was the distinction between time and the unchanging or eternal. In *Timaeus* 37D–E the demiurge

> took thought to make, as it were, a moving likeness of eternity; and, at the same time that he ordered the heaven, he made, of eternity that abides in unity, an everlasting likeness moving according to number—that to which we have given the name Time.

Compare "O qui perpetua," lines 2–3.

17. beyond all other containment: God is beyond all space, as well as beyond time. Plato had characterized space/matter as the "container" or "receptacle" (*Timaeus* 46—"*receptaculum*," in Calcidius's translation).

18. the eternal Love . . . into other loves: God's "opening himself" and "eternal Love" into "other loves" expresses in very condensed form the Platonic doctrine of participation (given an extremely influential Christian formulation by the Pseudo-Dionysius in his treatise *On the Divine Names* (see the translation by Rorem [1987], and Rorem 1993; Aquinas's commentary [1950]; and Ivánka 1940), according to which such terms as *Being*, *Love*, *Light*, when applied to God, name absolutes and, when used of creatures, identify their participation in and derivation from the absolutes, as Dante uses the terms *Love* and *love*s here (for further discussion of Dante's use of these concepts, see Chapter 4 of Durling/Martinez 1990).

19–21. Nor previously did . . . waters come forth: Line 21 is (with the possible exception of "in his eternity"—see the note to lines 13–48 above) the first explicit echo of Genesis 1. A vital point throughout this passage is that the universe is not coeternal with God (as in the Arab philosophers); it begins with time and in time, but there "was" no time before it. The lines are leading up to the emphasis on the idea that the universe was created instantaneously (but cf. the note to lines 22–36).

22–36. Form and matter . . . never be unstrung: This highly compressed, even epigrammatic formulation is, as far as we have been able to determine,

original with Dante. It was generally agreed among the theologians that the angels/Intelligences were pure form (see *Conv.* 3.7.5, with Vasoli and De Robertis's notes), and that the heavenly bodies were indissoluble unions of form and matter (i.e., of form and potentiality, the capacity to receive form). Most of Dante's commentators (except Nardi) gloss over the interpretation of lines 22 and 34 (some even asserting that "pure potentiality" refers to the four elements).

If we are to take the gnomic concision of the passage at face value, however, Dante cannot be adopting either the (not uncommon) idea that "the earth" refers to the four elements or Augustine's idea of the *rationes seminales*, meaning inchoate "seeds" of form present in created matter. Dante is clearly adopting the Neoplatonic concept of first matter as entirely devoid of forms, and that is coherent with his repeatedly stated view that the heavenly bodies *impose* form on matter (this radically distinguishes Dante's view from Aquinas's; see 13.61–66, with notes). That the four elements were formed from "matter" by the heavenly bodies and their governing Intelligences is explicit in 7.133–39 (on the whole question, see Nardi 1990a).

22–30. Form and matter . . . distinction of beginning: The theoretical model for this statement is obviously the nature of light as traditionally conceived, and Dante clearly considers the biblical verse "And God said; Be light made. And light was made" as the core statement of God's act of creation, as lines 25–27 will make explicit (cf. of course Gen. 2.7; see *Purg.* 25.34–75, with notes).

25–27. And as into glass . . . there is no interval: The analogy of light is now made explicit (cf. the same analogy in *CG* 2.19). The traditional view of the propagation of light was that it was the instantaneous actualization (bringing into act) of the diaphanous (a medium whose "act" is diffusing light; the term includes aether, air, and water), a quality we now know to result from water vapor, mainly limited to the earth's atmosphere. The traditional theory implied, and Dante takes for granted, the idea that the entire cosmos is ablaze with light; there was no notion of the darkness of outer space, night being simply the shadow of earth. (That light has a finite speed was suspected by Galileo and others in the seventeenth century, but only received an approximate experimental demonstration in 1675–76 and a satisfactorily exact one in 1849.)

25–26. as into glass, amber, or crystal: What determines the choice of these three materials, other than their transparency and their Trinitarian number? *Glass* has featured prominently in Canto 28 (especially in the form of mirrors), but the analogy of light entering glass without damaging it was frequent in discussions of the Virgin's conceiving by the Holy Spirit; *crystal/crystalline* is

the epithet of the *primum mobile* (the location of the present scene), because of its total transparency (invisibility—see *Conv.* 2.3.7 and 13—for crystal was thought to be water that had been purified of earthy qualities, so that it closely resembles the heavens. Amber was known to be the hardened sap of a variety of pine tree, but it was not known to be fossilized; according to Albert, it was thought to protect the chastity of those who bore it (on both crystals and amber, see Albertus Magnus 1967, and cf. Durling/Martinez 1990, Introduction)

28–30. so the triform effect . . . without distinction of beginning: The "effect" is "triform" because it reflects God's triune nature; "distinction of beginning" means "beginning at different times" (i.e., times that can be distinguished from each other), reinforcing the theme of simultaneity.

31–36. Order and structure . . . never be unstrung: An explanatory amplification of lines 22–30. The "order" is the hierarchy of value and position of the substances: the angels, pure form [act], are the summit in value and dwell in the highest; the perfect, unchanging heavenly spheres are the noblest substances that unite form and matter and occupy hierarchical positions from the *primum mobile* (the purest) on down to the moon; pure potentiality, constantly changing as different forms are imposed on it, occupies the sublunar realm. "*Costrutto*" [construct], which we take as a noun and render as "structure," we take to refer to the different relations of form and matter in the substances (it has also been seen as a past participle meaning "constructed," syntactically parallel with "*concreato*" [created together], but this seems a weak reading).

35–36. in the middle . . . never be unstrung: The heavens are perfect and, though not eternal, will exist perpetually. The permanent "bond" results from their having been directly created by God (cf. 13.58–87, with notes, and 8.97–114—with another instance of arrow imagery, for which see 7.118–20, with notes). Dante's Latinism *vime* [bond] echoes 28.100, where it is plural: these two are the only instances of Dante's use of this term.

37–45. Jerome wrote . . . without their perfection: Part 3 of Beatrice's exposition of God's creative act, refuting saint Jerome's statement (*In epistolam ad Titum* 1.2) that a "long tract" (series) of centuries intervened between the creation of the angels and that of the universe. This matter was judged important enough to be raised in Peter Lombard's *Liber sententiarum* (and thus it was discussed by every beginning theologian), but was not thought crucial to faith. The basis of the doctrine of instantaneous creation was Ecclus. 18.1 (see the note to lines 13–48).

43–45. and even reason . . . without their perfection: Aristotle had taught that there were no more Intelligences than the number of spheres that require being governed (*Metaphysics* 12.8; cf. Aquinas's *Expositio metaphysicae Aristotelis* 12 lect. 10), a position Dante rejects in *Conv.* 2.4.2–15, on the grounds that the highest function of angels is contemplation, and entertaining the probability that not all are involved in governing the spheres. The argument that the angelic movers' perfection would be postponed if they were created before their spheres is Aristotelian, derived from the passage just cited, but differently applied.

46–48. Now you know . . . extinguished in your desire: Conclusion to the exposition of creation, recalling lines 10–13. The "three fires" in the pilgrim's curiosity were "where" (see line 16), "when" (see lines 16 and 37–45), and "how" (see lines 14, 25–36). The important question "why" was also answered (lines 13–15).

49–66. Nor would one reach . . . affect is open to it: Part 2 of Beatrice's disquisition, expected because of the formal pause of the previous terzina, but introduced without introduction: the separation of the two groups of angels, the rebels (lines 49–51, 55–57) and the loyal (lines 52–54, 58–66), discussed in parallel, with interlacing, comprising two terzine on the rebels, four on the loyal (cf. 28.16–45, 98–114).

49–51. Nor would one reach . . . what bears your foods: The rebellious angels are the lesser number; according to *Inf.* 34.121–26, the earth opened to receive their fall. The earth is identified as the bearer (*soggetto* [subject, underlayer] of foods, emphasizing both God's provision for the nourishment of living things (Gen. 1.11–13) and the fallen angels' degradation to a status inferior to all else. Most interpreters take *alimenti* to be a variant spelling of *elementi* [elements], but this introduces a contradiction with *Inf.* 34.121–26, avoided by our reading; furthermore, "the subject of your elements" is nearly incomprehensible, since the four elements are created out of nothing (7.133–35, 29.23).

49–50. Nor would one reach . . . as quickly as: In other words, one could not have counted as far as twenty before the fall took place. Striking and puzzling lines that we are assuredly meant to connect with lines 1–6, with which they share emphasis on the brevity of the intervals and the vagueness of their specification.

55–57. The origin of the fall . . . weights of the world: Two biblical passages were drawn on for the rebellion of the angels; Apoc. 12.7–9:

> And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent who is called the devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world, and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels thrown down with him.

and Is. 14.12–15:

> How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning! How art thou fallen to the earth, that didst wound the nations! And thou saidst in thy heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the Covenant, in the sides of the north! I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most High. But yet thou shalt be brought down to Hell, into the depth of the pit.

56–57. whom you saw . . . weights of the world: There is indeed some degree of inconsistency between lines 49–57 and *Inf.* 34.121–26; for the earth to have already been formed (so as to open to receive the devils, to flee Satan), it would seem that the loyal angels would need to have already begun their work of shaping the sublunar (see the note to lines 22–36). Satan is at the center of the earth, *Inf.* 34.110–14: at "the *point* toward which the weights all move from every direction" (in parody of God's radiation of "every *ubi* and every *quando*," line 12); cf. *Inf.* 11.64; 32.3 and 73–74.

58–66. Those you see here . . . affect is open to it: The loyal angels *recognize* (for this important word, cf. 22.112–14, with notes) their status as creatures and turn in gratitude and love to God, who *raises* and illuminates them to their present fullness and fixity (lines parallel with 28.97–129; cf. lines 18, 46, 28.43–45).

64–66. and I would not have you . . . affect is open to it: Lines closely related to 28.109–14: in angels, as in human beings, the will must cooperate with God's grace, and this earns merit (lines 62, 65).

67–69. Now around this . . . without other assistance: Conclusion to part 2 of Beatrice's disquisition in this canto. Her remark is interesting, for it conflicts with the dramatic situation, in which the pilgrim must pay close attention to what Beatrice now goes on to say: his contemplation of "this consistory" will take place later, after his awakening. Although the fact is not stated, the reader

is the one implicitly addressed here: the reader can lift his or her eyes from the page and meditate on the implications of the poet's words (cf. 10.22–27).

70–126. But because on earth . . . coin with no imprint: Fifty-six lines, all but nineteen of the rest of the canto, are devoted to a denunciation of the frivolous and theologically invalid instruction in the schools and the preaching of the clergy (especially the friars). This denunciation begins (lines 70–84) as a corrective enlargement of the description of the status of the loyal angels in lines 58–66; then it broadens, denouncing useless controversy and irresponsible preaching, especially misinterpretation of the Bible. For the structural place of the "digression," see the note to lines 127–45.

70–84. But because on earth . . . guilt and more shame: As the commentators point out, the nature of the angels was the subject of voluminous discussion in the schools and in theological treatises; Dante singles out a single issue, whether the minds of the angels have memory.

75. equivocating readings: It was generally understood among the Scholastics that most terms used univocally of created things, such as *light*, *love*, *mind*, could only be used equivocally of God (see the note to line 18). Dante is criticizing the use of the term *memory* of the angels, which the Scholastics (e.g., Aquinas in *ST* 1a q. 54 a. 4, q. 55 a.2, q. 58 a. 1–5) used in a sharply reduced sense (thus equivocally), which Dante regards as misleading.

76–81. These substances . . . through divided concepts: Since the angels see all things in God simultaneously, their knowledge of one thing is never replaced ("interrupted") by their knowledge of some other thing, as happens in human beings. They therefore have no need of remembering [*rememorar*] "through [or: because of] divided concepts." The meaning of "divided concepts" has been disputed; the most probable meaning is that it amplifies "interrupted" (i.e., separate, listable, thus recallable, when only one thing can be focused on at a time).

82–84. so that down there . . . guilt and more shame: The error identified in the preceding lines is taught by some who believe it, and they are honestly deluded; others teach it knowing it to be false; they are both guilty and more shameful (the first are shameful but not guilty; "not asleep, they dream" applies to both groups).

85–87. You do not follow . . . and the thought of it: Vanity and the love of show explain the deplorable lack of theological/philosophical unanimity on earth: Dante is in favor of strict precision and orthodoxy.

88–126. But still, this is endured . . . coin with no imprint: What began as a critique of one theoretical error regarding angels now broadens: as bad as mistaken theology is, disregard of the Bible (as when pagan thinkers are taken more seriously) and distortions of it anger God and the saints more.

91–92. They do not consider . . . sow it in the world: The neglect and distortion of the Bible are particularly serious because of the cost in blood of its dissemination. Note the present tense of the verb "costs": Dante is not thinking only of the Crucifixion of Christ and the persecutions and martyrdoms of the early spread of Christianity: missionary activity in Asia and in Islamic countries was lively in the thirteenth century and was at times violently opposed.

92–93. and how pleasing . . . approaches it humbly: The frivolous teachers forget how much those please God and the saints who approach the Bible humbly (that the Bible, especially the relation between Old and New Testaments, can only be understood by the humble is an important Augustinian theme; see *Confessions* 3.5.9, *Inf.* 10. 63, with note).

94–126. For show each . . . coin with no imprint: The theme broadens into an attack on the preachers who repeat the foolishness of the schools and do not preach the Gospel, so that the "sheep" (the unlearned believers who desperately need serious guidance) are fed on "wind" (empty words) from the pulpit; unauthorized offers of indulgences are particularly condemned (lines 115–23).

97–102. One says the moon . . . as well as by the Jews: Again, one misinterpretation is singled out (lines 97–103) to exemplify the prevalent frivolity. One of Dante's targets is Aquinas, who accepted the eclipse theory (see Nardi 1956b).

100–102. and he lies . . . as well as by the Jews: Dante accepts the account in the three synoptic Gospels, which agree in stating that from the sixth hour of the day (midday) until the ninth (when Jesus died), darkness covered the entire earth ("universam terram" in Matt. 42.27 and Luke 23.44, "totam terram" in Mark 15.33; Luke 23.45 adds that the sun was darkened [obscuratus est sol]; John does not mention the matter). See next note.

101–2. seen by the Spaniards . . . as by the Jews: The lines indicate the extremes of the hemisphere of land (thus of the inhabited portion of the earth): the mouth of the Ebro in Spain and that of the Ganges in India; Jerusalem, of course, is at the center (cf. 22.151–53, with notes, *Inf.* 34.5, with

note, and *Inferno* Figure 8). The shadow cast by an eclipse would be in constant motion and would cover only a small portion of the earth at a time.

103–8. Florence has not so many . . . does not excuse them: The number of follies preached from Christian pulpits in a year is enormous, so that the unlearned are fed on wind; but their being unaware of the lack of true doctrine does not undo it; their ignorance is still harmful to them.

103. Florence has not so many Lapos and Bindos: This line indicates a very large number. Lapo and Bindo were particularly popular given names in Florence in Dante's time; Bindo has gone out of style, but Lapo was still very frequent as recently as fifty years ago.

109–26. Christ did not say . . . coin with no imprint: The contrast between the reliable and solid preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles (lines 109–14) and the frivolous preaching of modern friars (lines 118–26).

109–14. Christ did not say . . . their shield and lance: The Apostles were instructed by Christ; the "true foundation" was the Gospel, which was their sole message. The metaphor of armed warfare goes back to saint Paul (Eph. 6.14–17):

> Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of justice, And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. In all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one, And take unto you the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God).

115–26. Now they go with jests . . . coin with no imprint: This suggestive passage targets a broad spectrum of abuses, beginning with the vanity of preachers who seek only to be amusing and popular; their irresponsibility is such that they forget their responsibilities toward the faithful; in the pointed hoods of their habits (the Franciscans and Dominicans are meant), compared to the "beak" of a bird of prey, lurks a real bird of prey, the devil, waiting to seize the naive souls who too readily rely on the promises of "pardon" made by such preachers—in other words, the indulgences they offer.

The popularity of indulgences has become so great that the mob will run after any promise, no matter how baseless (coin without imprint—whose value is not guaranteed by any authority; cf. the notes to 24.83–87). Although Dante may seem to exempt officially promulgated indulgences here, he is actu-

ally criticizing indulgence-hunting in general and blaming the popes for fostering a credulous belief in them (especially Boniface VIII and the Jubilee of 1300; see Durling 2010).

124–26. On this saint Anthony's . . . coin with no imprint: Many convents of the mendicant order of saint Anthony kept pigs and fed them with the proceeds from begging: here the point is that frivolous preaching and offering of indulgences (not yet their sale) are done primarily out of greed for the money they generate.

127–45. But because we have . . . in itself as before: In addition to resituating the reader in the main narrative, the last lines of the canto return to the angels and God, in such a way that an elaborate parallelism is established in the structure of the canto; in its first half, Beatrice first discusses the creation of the world and the angels, then the fall of the rebel angels, and then the turning of the loyal angels to God (an archetypal instance of *epistrophe*, return); in the second half of the canto the misinterpretations and irresponsibility of teachers and preachers provide a parallel to the fall of the rebel angels turning away from the light (the devil himself appears in line 118; cf. next note), once again followed by the *return* to the angels and God.

127–29. But because we have . . . to fit our time: Beatrice characterizes lines 70–126 as a "walking away" ("siam digressi" [we have digressed]) from the "straight path" [*diritta strada*] of the argument. Note the recall of *Inf.* 1.3 ("la diritta via" [the straight way], lost, and the echoes of *Par.* 10.7 and 16 in "ritorci li occhi" [turn your eyes back] (lines 127–28; cf. "leva dunque . . . la vista" [lift your eyes therefore]) and "la diritta strada" (line 128; cf. "strada torta" [twisted path]). For running out of time, see 32.139–41, with note.

130–41. This nature steps . . . more and less fiery: These lines look back to 28.91–93 (on the great number of the angels; our note there cites the passage in Daniel in question here) and 28.106–14 (on the primacy of intellectual sight in the first triad), clarifying two points: (1) though far beyond human grasp (lines 130–32), the number of the angels is finite ("determinate," lines 133–35); and (2) each individual angel receives a degree of illumination unique to itself and thus feels a unique degree of beatitude.

136–45. The first Light . . . in itself as before: From the angels the discourse rises to God and recapitulates first (in lines 136–41) his illumination of the angels of 29.28–33 and 58–66—now applying 28.106–14 explicitly to all the orders of angels—and then (in lines 142–45) the account of his creation of the

angels, finally reenacting the dominant, repeated pattern of the canto (as of the poem as a whole): the return to God. Thus Cantos 28–29 provide an analogue of their own place in the *Comedy*.

140–41. the sweetness of love . . . more and less fiery: Dante has "ferve" [burns hotly] (cf. Eng. *fervent*) and "tepe" [burns warmly] (cf. Eng. *tepid*).

142–44. Now you see . . . it divides itself: The angels are mirrors reflecting God's light (glory, as in 1.1–3); note the ending of this canto with the mirror metaphor that opened this diptych on the angels (28.4–9).

145. remaining One in itself as before: Cf. 28.22–27 and 34–39, with note. See "O qui perpetua," whose last two lines recapitulate the poem, reenacting the procession of all things from God and their return to him, and ending with the pronoun "idem" [himself], i.e., in context, the Same (see our notes); and compare 13.52–60.

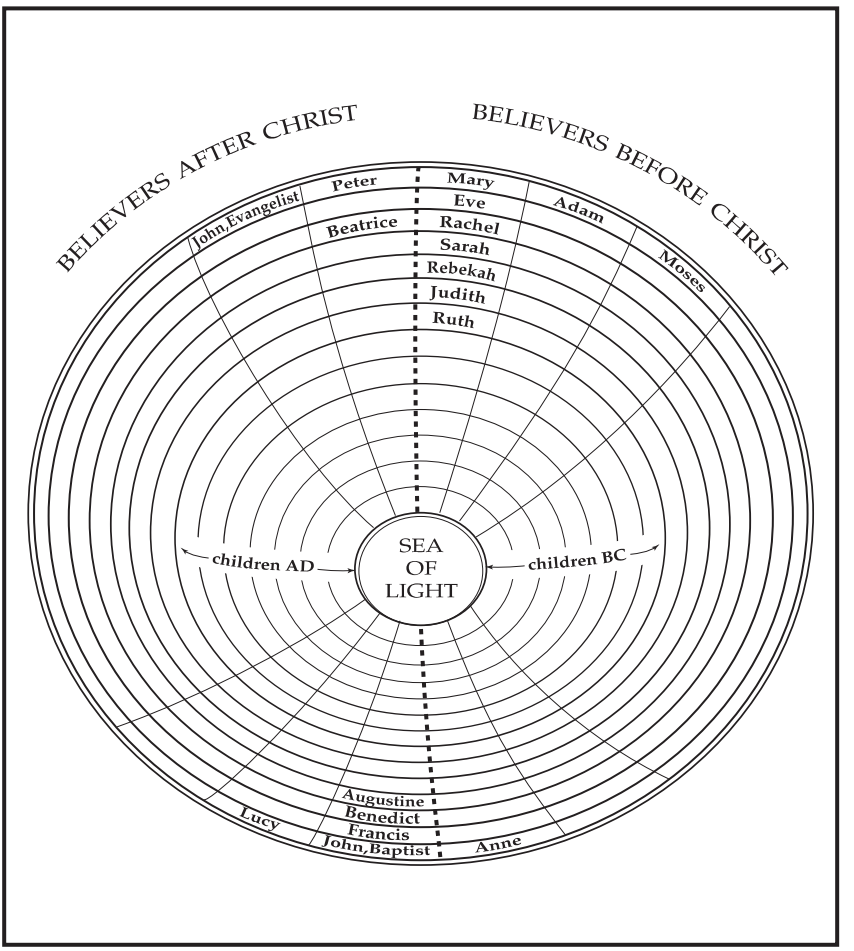

Figure 15. The seating in Dante's Empyrean

CANTO 30

Forse semilia miglia di lontano
ci ferve l'ora sesta, e questo mondo
china già l'ombra quasi al letto piano,
quando 'l mezzo del cielo a noi profondo
comincia a farsi tal ch' alcuna stella
perde il parere infino a questo fondo,
e come vien la chiarissima ancella
del sol più oltre, così 'l ciel si chiude
di vista in vista, infino a la più bella:
non altrimenti il trïunfo che lude
sempre dintorno al punto che mi vinse,
parendo inchiuso da quel ch' elli 'nchiude,
a poco a poco al mio veder s'estinse,
per che tornar con li occhi a Bëatrice
nulla vedere e amor mi costrinse.
Se quanto infino a qui di lei si dice
fosse conchiuso tutto in una loda,
poca sarebbe a fornir questa vice.
La bellezza ch' io vidi si trasmoda
non pur di là da noi, ma certo io credo
che solo il suo Fattor tutta la goda.
Da questo passo vinto mi concedo
più che già da punto di suo tema
soprato fosse comico o tragedo,
ché, come sole in viso che più trema,
così lo rimembrar del dolce riso
la mente mia da me medesmo scema.
Dal primo giorno ch' i' vidi il suo viso
in questa vita, infino a questa vista,
non m'è il seguire al mio canto preciso,

CANTO 30

Primum mobile, continued: the vision fades—the Empyrean: the river of light—the pilgrim's eyes drink—the heavenly rose

Perhaps six thousand miles away the sixth
hour is burning, and our world is lowering its
shadow down almost to the level bed,
when the transparency of the sky, deep
above us, begins to become such that some
stars no longer appear as far as this floor,
and as the brilliant handmaid of the sun
comes further up, so the sky closes itself, light
after light, even to the most beautiful:
not otherwise the triumph that plays ever
around the point that had overcome me,
seeming to be enclosed by that which it encloses,
little by little faded from my sight; therefore
my seeing nothing and my love constrained me
to return with my eyes to Beatrice.
If what has been said of her up to now were
concentrated all in one praise, it would be
insufficient to serve this occasion.
The beauty I saw transcends measure, not
only beyond us, but surely I believe that only its
Maker enjoys it fully.
At this pass I concede myself vanquished,
more than any comic or tragic poet has ever
been surpassed by a point of his theme,
for like the sun in the most trembling sight,
the memory of that sweet smile separates my mind
from myself.
From the first day I saw her eyes in this life,
until this sight, my song has not been cut off
from following,

ma or convien che mio seguir desista
più dietro a sua bellezza poetando,
come a l'ultimo suo ciascuno artista.
Cotal qual io la lascio a maggior bando
che quel de la mia tuba, che deduce
l'ardüa sua matera terminando,
con atto e voce di spedito duce
ricominciò: "Noi siamo usciti fore
del maggior corpo, al Ciel ch' è pura luce:
luce intellettüal piena d'amore,
amor di vero Ben pien di letizia,
letizia che trascende ogne dolzore.
Qui vederai l'una e l'altra milizia
di Paradiso, e l'una in quelli aspetti
che tu vederai a l'ultima giustizia."
Come sùbito lampo che discetti
li spiriti visivi sì che priva
da l'atto l'occhio di più forti obietti:
così mi circunfulse luce viva,
e lasciommi fasciato di tal velo
del suo fulgor che nulla m'appariva.
"Sempre l'amor che queta questo cielo
accoglie in sé con sì fatta salute,
per far disposto a sua fiamma il candelo."
Non fur più tosto dentro a me venute
queste parole brieve, ch' io compresi
me sormontar di sopr' a mia virtute,
e di novella vista mi raccesi,
tale che nulla luce è tanto mera
che li occhi miei non si fosser difesi.
E vidi lume in forma di rivera
fulvido di fulgore, intra due rive
dipinte di mirabil primavera;
di tal fiumana uscian faville vive,
e d'ogne parte si mettien ne' fiori,
quasi rubin che oro circunscrive;
poi, come inebrïate da li odori,
riprofondavan sé nel miro gurge,
e s'una intrava, un'altra n'uscia fori.

but now my following after her beauty in poetry must desist, as must every artist at his ultimate limit.

Such as I leave her to greater proclaiming than by my trumpet, whose arduous matter now calls it away to conclude,

she began again, with the act and voice of a decisive leader: "We have come forth from the largest body into the Heaven that is pure light:

intellectual light, full of love: love of the true Good, full of gladness, gladness that transcends every other sweetness.

Here you will behold both armies of Paradise, and one of them with that appearance that you will see at the last justice."

Like a sudden flash of lightning, that scatters the spirits of sight, depriving the eye of its functioning on stronger objects,

a living light flashed about me and left me swathed in such a veil of its brightness that nothing appeared to me.

"Always the Love that quiets this heaven gathers into itself with such a greeting, to make the candle ready for its flame."

No sooner did these brief words come in to me, than I understood I was rising above my own powers,

and I became rekindled with new sight such that no light is so pure that my eyes could not have borne it.

And I saw light in the form of a river, radiant as gold, between two banks painted with wondrous spring blossoming;

from that flowing issued living sparks, and on every side they entered into the flowers, like rubies circumscribed by gold;

then, as if inebriated by the fragrances, they plunged again into the wondrous torrent, and if one entered it, another came forth.

"L'alto disio che mo t'infiamma e urge,
d'aver notizia di ciò che tu vei,
tanto mi piace più quanto più turge,
ma di quest' acqua convien che tu bei
prima che tanta sete in te si sazi."
Così mi disse il sol de li occhi miei.
Anco soggiunse: "Il fiume e li topazi
ch'entrano ed escono e 'l rider de l'erbe
son di lor vero umbriferi prefazi.
Non che da sé sian queste cose acerbe,
ma è difetto da la parte tua,
che non hai viste ancor tanto superbe."
Non è fantin che sì sùbito rua
col volto verso il latte, se si svegli
molto tardato da l'usanza sua,
come fec' io, per far migliori spegli
ancor de li occhi, chinandomi a l'onda
che si deriva perché vi s'immegli;
e sì come di lei bevve la gronda
de le palpebre mie, così mi parve
di sua lunghezza divenuta tonda.
Poi, come gente stata sotto larve,
che pare altro che prima, se si sveste
la sembianza non süa in che disparve:
così mi si cambiaro in maggior feste
li fiori e le faville, sì ch'io vidi
ambo le corti del Ciel manifeste.
O isplendor di Dio, per cu' io vidi
l'alto trïunfo del regno verace,
dammi virtute a dir com' ïo il vidi!
Lume è là sù che visibile face
lo Creatore a quella creatura
che solo in lui vedere ha la sua pace,
e si distende in circular figura
in tanto che la sua circunferenza
sarebbe al sol troppo larga cintura.
Fassi di raggio tutta sua parvenza
reflesso al sommo del mobile primo,
che prende quindi vivere e potenza.

"The deep desire that now enflames and
drives you to know what it is you see, pleases
me more the more swollen it becomes,
but of this water you must drink before that thirst
in you may be satisfied." So spoke the sun of my eyes.
And she added: "The river and the topazes
that enter and come forth and the laughing of
the flowers are shadowy prefaces of their truth.
Not that these things are unripe in
themselves; rather it is a lack on your part, since
your eyes are not yet strong enough."
There is no little child that more quickly
rushes with his face toward the milk, if he
awakens much later than his custom,
than I became, to make better mirrors of my
eyes, bending toward the wave that pours forth
for us to be bettered in it;
and as soon as the eaves of my eyelids drank
from it, then it seemed to me, instead of being
long, to have become round.
Then, like people who have been masked,
who look different from before, if they divest
themselves of the alien seeming under which
they had disappeared:
so the flowers and the sparks changed into
greater festivity, and I saw made manifest both
the courts of Heaven.
O splendor of God, in which I saw the high
triumph of the true kingdom, give me the power
to say how I saw it!
There is a light up there that makes the
Creator visible to those creatures that have their
peace only in seeing him,
and it spreads itself out in circular shape so
great that its circumference would be far too
large a belt for the sun.
All of its appearance is made of a ray
reflected from the highest part of the first
mobile, which from it takes life and power.

E come clivo in acqua di suo imo
si specchia, quasi per vedersi addorno
quand' è nel verde e ne' fioretti opimo:
sì. soprastando al lume intorno intorno,
vidi specchiarsi in più di mille soglie
quanto di noi là sù fatto ha ritorno.
E se l'infimo grado in sé raccoglie
sì grande lume, quanta è la larghezza
di questa rosa ne l'estreme foglie!
La vista mia ne l'ampio e ne l'altezza
non si smarriva, ma tutto prendeva
il quanto e 'l quale di quella allegrezza.
Presso e lontano, lì, né pon né leva,
ché dove Dio sanza mezzo governa
la legge natural nulla rileva.
Nel giallo de la rosa sempiterna,
che si digrada e dilata e redole
odor di lode al Sol che sempre verna,
qual è colui che tace e dicer vole,
mi trasse Bëatrice, e disse: "Mira
quanto è 'l convento de le bianche stole!
Vedi nostra città quant' ella gira,
vedi li nostri scanni sì ripieni
che poca gente più vi si disira.
E 'n quel gran seggio a che tu li occhi tiene
per la corona che già v'è sù posta,
prima che tu a queste nozze ceni,
sederà l'alma, che fia giù agosta,
de l'alto Arrigo ch' a drizzare Italia
verrà in prima ch'ella sia disposta.
La cieca cupidigia che v'ammalia
simili fatti v'ha al fantolino
che muor per fame e caccia via la balia.
E fia prefetto nel foro divino
allora tal che palese e coverto
non anderà con lui per un cammino.
Ma poco poi sarà da Dio sofferto
nel santo officio, ch' el sarà detruso
là dove Simon mago è per suo merto,
e farà quel d'Alagna intrar più giuso."

And as a hillside mirrors itself in the water at its base, as if to see how it is adorned when it is opulent with greenery and flowers:

so, placed above the light all around, I saw mirroring themselves, in more than a thousand tiers, as many of us as have returned up there.

And if the lowest degree gathers so great a light into itself, how great is the breadth of this rose in its remotest petals!

My sight was not lost amid the breadth and height, but took in all the quantity and quality of that happiness.

Near and far, there, neither adds nor detracts, for where God governs without intermediary, natural law has no sway.

Into the yellow of the sempiternal rose, which rises by degrees and expands and breathes forth the fragrance of praise to the Sun of perpetual spring,

like one who is silent but wishes to speak, Beatrice drew me, and said: "Behold how great is the convent of the white stoles!

See our city, how much it encircles, see that our thrones are so full that few people are still lacking.

And in that great throne which draws your eyes because of the crown already placed above it, before you dine at these nuptials

the noble Harry's soul will be enthroned, which will be august down below and will come to raise Italy up before she is so disposed.

The blind greed that bewitches you has made you like the little child that is dying of hunger but drives away his wet-nurse.

And the prefect of God's forum will be such then that neither openly nor covertly will he tread the same path with him.

But only briefly will he be suffered by God in the sacred office, for he will be thrust for his merits down there where Simon Magus is,

and he will make the one from Alagna enter farther into the rock."

NOTES

1–36. Perhaps six thousand miles . . . away to conclude: An astronomical simile (lines 1–12) prefaces the poet's renunciation of further attempts to render Beatrice's beauty (lines 13–36; cf. 14.79–81, 18.7–9, 23.22–24). The two sections are linked by words implying conclusion: we find "as far as" or "until" [*infino*] at lines 6, 9, 16, 29; also "closes" (line 8), "limit" (line 33), and "conclude" (line 36). Poetic valediction echoes the sky that "closes itself," and both the poet's art and the pilgrim's journey will cross a significant boundary in the canto.

1–15. Perhaps six thousand miles . . . my eyes to Beatrice: Like stars fading at dawn, the spectacle of circling angelic orders vanishes, and the pilgrim's eyes return to the eyes of Beatrice, where the angels had first appeared (see 28.1–12 and note). The divine point of lines 10–11, enclosing what it seems enclosed by, is itself enclosed by the conceit of the lady's eyes as the beginning and end of the pilgrim's view of the angels (see line 9 and note). By the logic of lines 10–11, a further implication is that the divine encloses the lady, and the poem.

1–9. Perhaps six thousand . . . to the most beautiful: This is the first of three sunrise scenes in the Empyrean (see 31.118–20; 32.106–8 and notes). Mention of night, the "shadow" of earth, which never extends beyond the subsolar spheres, heralds a major transition. See Additional Note 6.

1–3. Perhaps six thousand . . . the level bed: For Dante, the circumference of the earth was 20,400 miles (*Conv.* 2.13.11); noon is distant from sunrise by a quarter of this, or 5100 miles, so if noon is 6000 miles away, above the river Ganges, sunrise for Italy is 900 miles away, about an hour.

2–3. our world . . . level bed: If the axis of the sun and of the earth's conical shadow (9.118–19 and note) is imagined as a straight line with the earth's center as its fulcrum, and if the sun is just below that horizon on one side, then the shadow will be just above that horizon on the other. As the sun rises, the shadow sinks; when the sun touches the horizon, the shadow's apex will be in the same plane on the opposite side. Cf. 29.1–9, 1–3 and notes, and Additional Note 8.

4–6. when the transparency . . . as this floor: Rarely for *Paradiso*, the point of view is not the *primum mobile*, but Italy ("this floor"), from which we look up through the medium of the air to the summit of the sky ("deep above us").

7–8. and as the brilliant handmaid of the sun comes further up: Aurora (the dawn), one of the Hours (see *Purg.* 22.118–20 and note), and, more recently, the morning star (Venus), have all been identified by commentators as the "handmaid." Ovid has all three present at the sunrise in *Met.* 2.111–49; indeed, Dante adapts *Met.* 2.112–14:

> See, watchful Aurora from the shining east throws wide
> her crimson doors and rose-filled halls: the stars flee,
> gathered in flocks by the light bearer [*lucifer*],
> and he is last to depart his post in the sky.

The passage supports either Aurora or Venus as the sun's handmaid, since Venus gathers the stars, then fades (as in Dante's line 9; see next note), but Aurora is the chief cause of the stars' flight (she appears again, dispelling the darkness, at *Met.* 2.144; see also 31.124–29 and note). The superlative in line 7 [*chiarissima*] favors brilliant Venus, but the syntax of the passage, linking the first brightness in line 5 ("begins to become") to its increase in lines 7–8 ("comes further up") supports the candidacy of Aurora, the more likely cause of the effect described in lines 4–6.

9. light after light, even to the most beautiful: Venus, loveliest and brightest of stars, is the last to disappear in the light of the rising sun. On Dante's famous error, see the note on *Purg.* 1.19–21. However, when in Pisces Venus would indeed rise several hours before the sun in Aries. The rhyme words to lines 5 and 9 echo the first mention of Beatrice's star-bright eyes (*Inf.* 2.53, 55).

10–12. not otherwise the triumph . . . which it encloses: A triumph is a procession (see *Purg.* 29.107–8 and note, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 16), though not normally a circular one; that it "plays" [*lude*] suggests a theatrical performance [*ludo*] (see *Inf.* 22.118 and note), accommodating divine mysteries to the poet's understanding (see note to 4.40–42). Dante seems to echo here the famous second definition of God in the *Liber XXIV philosophorum* as "an intelligible sphere, whose center is everywhere, and circumference nowhere," also echoed by Bonaventura (*Itinerarium* 5.8).

16–21. If what has been said . . . enjoys it fully: Line 16 echoes "I say of her," a formula in Dante's praise of Beatrice in the prose division of "Donne ch'avete" ([lines 16–18] VN 19.27–30), as well as the author's promise in concluding his youthful work "to say of her what has not been said of any woman" (*VN* 42.2). The "style of praise" (*stile della loda*; see *VN* 18.8–9, *Purg.* 24.49–51 and note) in that work informs the poet's hyperbole here, rolling all praise up into one.

To Dante, Beatrice "seemed not the daughter of a mortal man, but of God" (*VN* 2.8, adapting Homer's praise of Hector as cited in Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* 7.1). Only God can know a creature completely (cf. Ps. 138.1–3, 13–17).

22–24. At this pass . . . point of his theme: For the poet's duty to choose a manageable subject, see 23.64–66 and note. For Dante's naming his poem "*Comedy*" and his conception of its genre, see *Inf.* 21.2 with note, closely following on Virgil's calling the *Aeneid* a *tragedy* (*Inf.* 20.113; cf. also *DVE*, 2.4.5, and *Ep.* 13.28–30). Early commentators treated the poem as of mixed genre, at once comedy, tragedy, and satire, the last because of the criticism of the papacy and contemporary institutions, as in lines 139–48.

28–33. From the first day . . . his ultimate limit: Dante dates his praise of Beatrice from his first sight of her as a child (*VN* 2.1). All human skill has its limits, and the subject at hand is beyond even a great poet like Dante. For the artisan-poet, see *Purg.* 26.115–17 and note, and *Inter cantica* there.

34–36. Such as I leave her . . . away to conclude: Dante does not suppose a future poet would sing of Beatrice; rather, the *tuba* typical of high epic style can be trumped only by the fanfares of the Last Judgment (Apoc. 8.2–10.7; see, using the same word [*bando*], *Purg.* 30.13 and note). *Deduce* at line 35 conceals a metaphor for poetic song as drawing and spinning thread, as in Ovid, *Met.* 1.4: "Draw out my song" [*deducite . . . carmen*]: this metaphor informs *preciso* [cut off] in line 30.

37–123. she began again . . . natural law has no sway: In this major transition, the pilgrim's crossing from the temporal to the divine occurs in four stages: (1) Beatrice describes the next Heaven and its marvels (lines 37–45); (2) the pilgrim, surrounded by a burst of light (46–54), sees a river of light, its banks tended by angels (55–81), but (3) this image is left behind after he drinks from the river with his eyes (82–87); (4) thereafter he views an assembly of the blessed (88–123). The image of the river, drawing on Apoc. 22.1 (see note to 61–63) is the pilgrim's first glimpse of the realm of pure, intelligible light. See Additional Note 6.

37–45. she began again . . . at the last justice: Fulfilling Benedict's promise (22.58–63), Beatrice tells the pilgrim he will henceforth see souls as if reclothed in bodies, as they will appear at the Last Judgment, (cf. lines 34–35). But the blessed do not really have bodies (cf. 25.122–29 and notes, and 91–96 and note); the pilgrim will see an accommodated display. See Introduction, pp. 14–15.

38–40. We have come forth . . . light full of love: From the largest and swiftest of all the physical spheres, the *primum mobile*, the pilgrim and Beatrice enter the Empyrean, described by some Scholastics as *lux pura*, pure intellectual light; it is "placed" only within the mind of God (27.109–14), even as it bounds the *primum mobile* with light and love (see 28.54). For Dante, as for the Neoplatonic tradition, the intellectual sphere contains and governs the world of Nature, as the soul the body. See *Par.* 2.133–48 and note, Additional Notes 10 and 11, and Nardi 1967b.

38–39. We have come forth from the largest body: Compare *Inf.* 1.23, "having come forth [*uscito*] out of the deep onto the shore." Here too the pilgrim's motion echoes the Exodus, an archetype for the poem's action; see our introduction to the *Purgatorio*, pp. 11–15, *Ep.* 13.21, and *Conv.* 2.1.6: "during the exit [*uscita*] of the people of Israel from Egypt." See also 31.85–87 and note.

39–41. pure light . . . gladness: Affect (love) follows upon understanding (sight, enabled by light) to bring about joy ("gladness"; cf. *Purg.* 18.32–33 and note). For the linking of terms [*gradatio*] see also lines 28–33, 95–99, and 28.28–30 and notes.

43–44. Here you will behold both armies of Paradise: Both the legions of angels and the redeemed souls of the Church Triumphant in Heaven. The military emphasis follows from the status of the blessed as trophies of Christ's victory in the Resurrection (see 9.118–25, 14.124–25, 23.19–20 and notes). The angels, too, fought against Satan (cf. *Inf.* 7.12, 34.121 and notes).

45. that you will see at the last justice: Further assurance that the pilgrim will be saved (cf. *Inf.* 3.91–93; *Par.* 15.28–30, 25.52–56 and notes); see also line 135.

46–54. Like a sudden flash . . . ready for its flame: Preparation of the pilgrim's sight is detailed with terms signifying light at lines 46, 49, 51, and 54.

46. Like a sudden flash of lightning that scatters: Lightning suggests the direct agency of Heaven (cf. 6.79, and *Purg.* 9.28–30, 12.25–27, 29.16–30 and notes). The interruption of the pilgrim's vision caps a series: the vision of the angels faded (line 14); the poet's mind lapsed (line 25), and the poet's praise was cut off (line 30). Compare the challenge of conceiving and writing the *Paradiso* stated at 1.1–12, and summarized by Shaw 1981: what is seen cannot be fully grasped by the mind; what is grasped memory cannot retain; and what is retained cannot adequately be put into words. Cf. *Purg.* 32.61–90 and note.

49–51. a living light . . . appeared to me: Last of the many references to Saul being "caught up to the third Heaven" and converted into Paul the Apostle (Acts 9.3): "And suddenly a light from heaven shone round about him [*circumfulsit eum*]" (cf. *Inf.* 2.28, and *Par.* 1.4–6, 2.37–39, 26.10–12 and notes; also *Ep.* 13.79). "Flashed about me" [*circumfulse*] renders Dante's only use of this term, which joins *fulgere* [shine, glow] with the prefix for encirclement, exactly transposing the Vulgate term. The citation prepares the transcendence of line 57 (see also Matt. 17.1–13, of the transfiguration; cf. *Purg.* 32.73–81 and notes).

Entering the Empyrean (for Aquinas, the "third Heaven" Paul visits; *ST* 2a 2ae q. 175 a. 3) was the pilgrim's goal at the outset (1.4–5).

52–54. Always the love that quiets . . . the candle for its flame: Further reference to Augustine's unquiet heart (see 1.112, 2.112, etc.); for the Empyrean "quieted" by Love, see 32.61; also 1.97 and note. "Always" suggests that the pilgrim follows a path taken by all the saved.

53. greeting: Our translation of *salute*, the word Dante had used for both Beatrice's greeting and his salvation; see *VN* 3.10, 11.4, and Additional Note 1.

54. to make the candle ready for its flame: Compare Guinizelli, "Al cor gentil," 21–22:

> Amor per tal ragion sta' n cor gentile
> per qual lo foco in cima del doplero.
> [Love for the same reason stays in the gentle heart
> as the flame does atop the torch.]

See 28.1–6, and *Purg.* 26.92, 97–99 and notes.

55–60. No sooner did these brief words . . . not have borne it: That the pilgrim exceeds his own powers recalls 1.70 (see note), where his *trasumanar* [self-transcendence] was compared to Glaucus becoming a god in the sea.

61–69. And I saw light . . . another came forth: The pilgrim's sight of a river of light, from which angels emerge and reimmerse themselves after entering the flowers on the riverbanks, anticipates what is to follow (76–78). The scene represents divine power, distributed by the angelic intelligences, pouring into the spiritual world, then into the physical (see note to line 61).

61–63. And I saw light . . . wondrous spring blossoming: See Apoc. 22.1: "And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb," prefigured by Daniel 7.10: "A swift stream of

fire [*fluvius igneus*] issued forth from before him [God]"). Also cited by commentators is a passage of the poem by Alain de Lille, *Anticlaudianus* 6.241–42, where the Trinity is at once fountain [*fons*], stream [*rivus*], and flow [*fluens*].

61. And I saw light in the form of a river: The "flow" of divine power goes back to Plotinus's ideas of creation as the overflowing of the goodness of the One, influenced by Christians who had absorbed Middle Platonism: in Macrobius the sun is the "fount of celestial light" (*Comm.*1.20.2); while Pseudo-Dionysius imagines God as a sun, "a fontal ray and superemanating effusion of light" (*De nom. div.* 4.5). Commenting on the *Liber de causis* 1.1 (cited at *Ep.* 13.57), Albertus Magnus continues this emphasis: "Actual being . . . flows [*fluit*] from the essence that is the form of things, as light flows from its source [*sicut lumen fluit a luce*]; see also Aquinas, *In librum de causis expositio* §363: "All the goodness found in things flows from the first cause . . . and this is because although the first cause flows in a single influx over all things, its influx is received by different things in different ways" (see 1.2–3 and note); also *Conv.* 3.2.4 (quoting *Liber de causis* 20) and 3.14.5. See Additional Notes 10 and 11.

62. radiant as gold: In Alain de Lille's *Anticlamdianus* 5.395, the Empyrean is "brighter than gold" [*fulgentior auro*]. A textual variant, *fluvido* [fluid] rather than *fulvido* [tawny, golden] would emphasize the liquidity of the light (see Ariani 1993).

62–63. between two banks . . . wondrous spring blossoming: *Primavera* is here a trope for flowers (whole for part, or cause for effect). The flowers, and the use of the word for "spring" (elsewhere only at *Purg.* 28.51 and 143, *Par.* 28.116), distantly echo the valley of Princes (*Purg.* 7.61–136 and note), and the Earthly Paradise (*Purg.* 28.1–36, 49–51 and notes).

64–66: from that flowing . . . circumscribed by gold: Ruby and gold, the colors of love and of the Empyrean, pinpoint the sparks of the angels entering the yellow blossoms; they are like gems in a precious setting. The entry and exit of the angels recalls the Jacob's ladder on which they ascend and descend (22.70–75 and note), and recapitulates the rhythm of divine procession and return.

67. as if inebriated. See Ps. 35.9: "They shall be inebriate with the plenty of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure." The psalm text exemplifies how the joys of Heaven may be spoken of with synesthetic metaphors that employ several senses, especially touch, taste, and smell. The plunge of the angels anticipates lines 85–90. See 27.1–3 and note.

68. plunged again into the wondrous torrent: "Torrent" [*gurge*] transcends its negative precedents: the seas that nearly drown Aeneas's crew at *Aen.* 1.118, the whirlpool of Charybdis (*Aen.* 3.421), Styx and Cocytus, and the waters that purge the sinful (*Aen.* 6.741), are all *gurgites*; but so is the sea where Glaucus dwells as a sea god (see 1.67–69 and note). See Additional Note 2, and Rossi 1985.

70–75. The deep desire . . . the sun of my eyes: As in the earthly Paradise, where the pilgrim is drawn upstream by desire for Matelda, Beatrice approves of the pilgrim's desire to know, whetted in suggestively erotic terms ("swollen"; cf. 10.139–48 and note). She is still his sun; the continuity of the poet's desire from his first enamorment to Beatrice's present exaltation, exemplifying the affirmation of love's goodness in *Purg.* 17.91–92 and 18.37–39 (with notes), is one of the poem's significant achievements. This is the center-point of the canto; for the "spiritual senses" suggested, see note to lines 82–90.

76–78. And she added . . . shadowy prefaces of their truth: The river, its banks, and the angels anticipate what is to follow. Line 78 reflects Paul's account of how Jewish ceremonial will be superseded by Christian ritual; see Colossians 2.17, and especially Heb. 10.1: "For the Law [has] a shadow [*umbra*] of the good of things to come [*futurorum bonorum*], not the very image of the things."

77. the laughing of the flowers: Dante adopts a poetic metaphor often used in rhetorical treatises to exemplify metaphor itself (cf. *Carmina Burana* 114.1: "Now all the fields laugh"; also Geoffroi de Vinsauf, *Poetria nova* lines 1764–66). Basic poetic technique is again applied to render the highest truths.

79–81. Not that these things . . . not yet strong enough: Beatrice means that the things that the pilgrim sees—the angels, the blessed, God's outpouring in the river—are not unripe, they are real and present. But the mode in which they appear will change as the pilgrim's sight becomes stronger.

82–96. There is no little child . . . the courts of Heaven: The transition from a linear to a circular image of heavenly light (see first note to canto 28) occupies five terzinas: as in *Purg.* 31.94–105 and 33.136–45 (see notes), where drinking from the two rivers of Eden brings about the restoration of justice, here the draught of light effects a passage into the poem's final vision of Heaven.

The idea of poetic eloquence as a torrent is in the background (cf. the pilgrim's greeting of Virgil, *Inf.* 1.80). When Dante speaks of "milk" in the poem, he refers either to infants at the breast or to poets nourished by the Muses (e.g., *Purg.* 22.102, of Homer, "to whom the Muses gave more milk than ever to

any other"); see also *Purg.* 22.64–66, *Par.* 23.55–60 and notes, and note to lines 82–84.

82–90. There is no little child . . . to have become round: The conceit of drinking through the eyes as if through the mouth (see line 74) continues, a case of synesthetic metaphor (cf. Ps. 33.9, "O taste and see," cited at note to 1.68), though the pilgrim makes his eyes into mirrors (line 85), again affirming the primacy of vision.

82–84: There is no little child . . . later than his custom: The pilgrim's urgency is that of a just-awakened baby, its hunger sharpened by delay. For the basis of love and desire in infants, see *Purg.* 16.85–90, 91–93; 24.106–12; 27.43–45 (where Beatrice is also the bait) and notes. See also *Par.* 14.64–65, and note to 23.121–26. The light that sustains the universe is, in metaphor, milk from a mother's breast.

85–87. than I became . . . to be bettered in it: The rush to drink, and reference to the eyes as mirrors, recalls the actions of the dreamer of the *Roman de la rose*: he sees in the fountain of Narcissus two crystals that reflect an entire garden, including the red rose that draws him on for the length of the poem (see *RR* 1425–1680, and see note to lines 70–75 and 117); see also 3.16–18 and note.

88. and as soon as the eaves of my eyelids drank from it: In a remarkable metaphor, the eyelashes (or eyelids) are thought of as the eaves [*gronde*] that channel rain off a roof (gutters are *grondaie*; for the metaphor in another context, see *DVE* 1.10.4). Dante's homely word replaces the standard term for eyelids or eyelashes [*ciglio*, *cigli*]; cf. 23.78, 32.138). See Additional Note 6.

91–96. Then like people . . . the courts of Heaven: Disclosure of the "real" image is like the moment of unmasking at a ball; but see note to lines 37–45.

97–123. O splendor of God . . . natural law has no sway: The view of the celestial court is provided by the *lumen gloriae* through which God makes himself visible to man, yet still indirectly: reflected from the surface of the *primum mobile*, the divine ray affords the pilgrim a view of the blessed in the Empyrean rose that is a reflection of that light. This is the third of the "three lights" in aid of the pilgrim's journey (see Singleton 1958 and Additional Note 1). Deferral of a direct gaze into the Trinity leaves room for further exaltation ahead.

97–99. O splendor of God . . . to say how I saw it: Line 97 closely echoes 1.2 ("penetrates . . . and shines forth"), and marks the pilgrim's full passage into the heavenly court; the poet uses triple identical rhyme *vidi* ["I saw"; lines 95, 97,

99), a pattern used in the poem only for the name of Christ and at *Purg.* 20.65–69 (see note); here it furnishes three of the twenty-five instances of "see" [*vedere*] and related terms in the canto. The rhyme is a "signature" of the poet-craftsman, completing the transition begun by the *gradatio* of lines 39–42.

100–108. There is a light . . . takes life and power: Comparing the circumference of the base of the rose to the sun describes both its vast size and its brilliance; in lines 103–5, each line includes a word denoting circularity.

The direct ray descending from God and reflected from the *primum mobile* represents how that sphere is itself driven by its desire for the divine ray; the purely spiritual Heaven and physical world are in vital contact (Nardi 1967b).

109–14. And as a hillside . . . have returned up there: The rising rows of the celestial court are compared to a verdant slope reflected in a lake; the rows might suggest terraces, but the image of an amphitheatre with ranks of seats is more immediate (see 32.7–39 and note). The triumph of 23.19–21, which received the pilgrim like one of the blessed arriving in Heaven, anticipated this assembly (see 31.37–39 and note); note the emphasis on going to Heaven as a return.

109. a hillside: Italian *clivo* (cf. "declivity"), based on Lat. *clivus*, was used of the steep roads up the hills of Rome, including the Capitoline (Scott 1977).

110. as if to see how it is adorned: The hillside is personified, as if gazing on itself in a mirror, perhaps alluding to the contemplative role of the blessed who populate it (cf. Rachel, *Purg.* 27.100–108, *Par.* 32.7–9 and note). Compare the despoiled tree, also personified, of Adam's progeny (*Inf.* 3.112–17, with note).

113. I saw mirroring themselves in more than a thousand tiers: That the blessed look down into the central area rather than directly up at the light is a possible reading; one of them gazes at a soul diametrically across the rose (31.133–34), and the pilgrim will look up for the final vision (33.49–51). The "mirroring" might also refer to the formation of the rose itself from the reflected light of God's glory (see note to lines 97–123).

115–23. And if the lowest degree . . . natural law has no sway: Given the size of the rose, the outermost petals are in a sense distant; but the pilgrim can see across to them because this distance imposes no reduction of size on what he sees (there is really no "space" between) and no diminution of intensity or clarity because of an intervening medium. Cf. 29.25–27, 31.70–78 and notes.

115–17. And if the lowest degree . . . its remotest petals: The outermost petals of the rose will encircle a space far more vast than the enormous circle where

the pilgrim stands (lines 104–5). For the rose's shape, see 32.7–39, 25–26 and notes.

117. the breadth of this rose in its remotest petals: Dante introduces a white rose as the image for his celestial court; its "petals" are the white-clad souls of the blessed (line 128; see 25.122–29 and note; see "white robes" [*stolis albis*] at Apoc. 3.5, 7.13). The choice reflects devotion to the Virgin Mary (in the liturgy she is the "rose without thorn," *rosa sine spina*), but also the *Roman de la rose*, in which the red rose signifies the female sexual object of the dreamer, from his first sight of it in the pool of Narcissus to the satisfaction of his desire (see note to lines 85–87). The alteration of the red rose into the white and yellow rose of the Empyrean is an example of how Dante transformed the literature that preceded him.

124–48. Into the yellow . . . enter further into the rock: Beatrice describes Heaven as an ideal imperial city with a throne reserved for Emperor Henry (or Harry) VII, in 1300 not yet elected emperor, and subsequently consigns Harry's chief antagonist, Pope Clement V, to the Malebolge in Hell. Her words reenact the vast reach of the pilgrim's ascent from Hell to the rose; cf. 31.4–24 and note.

124–26. Into the yellow . . . the Sun of perpetual spring: The center of the rose casts forth scent (meaning praise) to the divine light, which renews itself like an eternal spring. Italian *vernare* [to become spring] is untranslatable with a single word (cf. *svernare*, 27.142); the consonant and assonant series binding lines 124–25 ("si *d*i*g*r*ad*a e *d*i*l*a*t*a e re*d*o*l*e / o*d*or *d*i lo*d*e al So*l*"), suggesting the pulsing life of the rose, can scarcely be rendered at all.

128–32. Beatrice drew me . . . few people are still lacking: Garbed in the white stoles of their fictive bodies, the souls in the rose make up a "convent," implying a monastic community (see *Purg.* 26.127–32 and note, and Additional Note 4). There are few empty seats because the Last Judgment, when the tally will be complete, is not far off (see 32.25–27 and note, *Conv.* 2.14.13). Beatrice's pride in her populous city reverses Lam. 1.1 ("How doth the city sit solitary, that was once full of people"), used by Dante to describe Florence bereft of Beatrice (*VN* 30.1), and Rome abandoned by pope and emperor (*Ep.* 11.1, 21). See Carroll, and Martinez 1997.

130. See our city how much it encircles: Only at 25.56 is "Jerusalem" used to denote Heaven; the other use of the city's name in the *cantica* is satirical (19.127–29 and note). Dante's celestial city is reminiscent of Rome (see lines

110, 133–38; 31.34–36, 103–4; 32.116–20 and notes; and *Purg* 32.100–102 with note).

133–38. And in that great throne . . . before she is so disposed: Henry (or Harry), count of Luxembourg (b. 1275) was elected emperor in 1308 and crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle on Epiphany, 6 January 1309. His idealism, honesty, and popularity encouraged hopes for renewed imperial authority in Italy, and he initially enjoyed the support of Clement V, who backed his election as a counterweight to the growing power of Philip IV, "the Fair." In the winter of 1310, the Emperor-elect crossed into Italy with a small army, and with the support of the Lombard cities that were his chief vassals, received (to Dante's great satisfaction; see *Ep.* 5) the iron crown of the Lombards in Milan on 6 January 1311. Yet Harry found his coronation at St. Peter's in Rome blocked by Robert of Anjou, allied with Florence and the Guelph league, and doing the bidding of the pope; the coronation took place instead at the Lateran on 29 June 1312. Meanwhile, Harry lost the support of the Lombard cities by attempting to reimpose imperial vicars and taxation. Thereafter he besieged Florence (cf. *Ep.* 6) but, when forced to raise the siege, retired to Pisa. Traveling south the following summer in order to besiege the Angevin stronghold of Naples, Harry fell sick and died at Buonconvento, near Siena, on 24 August 1313.

137–38. to raise Italy up before she is so disposed: Since Italy is implicitly personified here (as she is explicitly at *Purg.* 6.76–90 and 16.91–96), that she is "not disposed" refers to the refusal of her citizens, especially Florentines (in 1312–13 ruled by the Black Guelphs; see *Inf.* 6.64–72 and note), to accept imperial authority. *Drizzare* has the sense of "raise to erect stature," continuing the personification (see *Mon.* 1.11.3); for the word used in a moral sense, see *Purg.* 23.125–26 and note. "Disposed" is used in the philosophical sense, referring to suitability or inclination to be moved toward a goal, formed, or perfected; cf. *Mon.* 1.13.6, 3.10.13, and Additional Note 2.

135. before you dine at these nuptials: The pilgrim's place at the "wedding supper of the Lamb," the feast prophesied at Apoc. 19.9, is assured; cf. also 24.1–6, *Purg.* 32.73–75 and notes, and Additional Note 4.

136. the noble Harry's soul will be enthroned: Despite *Purg.* 19.137 (see note there), Harry will retain the trappings of high office even in Paradise, possibly because, since he was an "anointed one" [*christus*], the emperor's authority flows directly from Christ (see *Mon.* 3.16.15). A throne prepared for Francis expected in Heaven is found in Bonaventure's *Legenda maior* 6.6; see also Kleinhenz 1995.

134. because of the crown already placed above it: Peters 1972 observes that glory and the imperial crown are mentioned together in the thirteenth-century Roman coronation ceremony: "Accept this sign of glory [*signum glorie*], the diadem of the kingdom, the crown of the empire [*coronam imperii*]" (Elze 1960). Rossi 1989a notes that at *Purg.* 6.89 the emperor's saddle, from which he might guide Italy, also stood empty in 1300, because no emperor was crowned in Rome between Frederick II and Henry VII. See Additional Note 2.

139–41. The blind greed . . . drives away his wet-nurse: For Dante, the great antagonist of human felicity was cupidity; first represented by the she-wolf of *Inf.* 1.49–54 (see note), it recurs throughout the poem (see *Inf.* 12.49–51, *Purg.* 20.10–14, *Par.* 27.121–26 and notes). The chief agents of cupidity on earth are corrupt popes and kings; the she-wolf's great enemy will be the greyhound prophesied by Virgil (*Inf.* 1.101–5 and notes), probably an emperor, since *Mon.*1.13.6–7 affirms that the emperor is beyond greed or cupidity by definition. See *Purg.* 33.34–51 and note.

141. is dying of hunger but drives away his wet-nurse: In a letter, Dante chided Florence for resisting Harry, "as if standing on the threshold of your prison repelling those who pity you, imprisoned as you are in handcuffs and leg irons, lest you might be freed" (*Ep.* 6.21). Cf. lines 82–84; also 27.127–35 and note.

142–44. And the prefect of God's forum . . . the same path with him: The pope is the ultimate arbiter of canon law (hence "God's forum"); many late medieval popes were canon lawyers. Clement V, residing by 1309 in Avignon and in league with Philip IV, "the Fair" (see *Inf.* 19.82–84, *Purg.* 20.91–93 and notes), fomented resistance to Harry in Italy after initially encouraging his mission (see 17.82, *Inf.* 6.64–72 and note, and *Ep.* 5.30) The passage probably means that the pope opposed Harry both secretly and openly. See Bowsky 1960, Menache 1998.

145–51. But only briefly . . . further into the rock: Beatrice's final words in the poem are among its harshest. Clement V reigned from 1305 until April 1314, dying only eight months after Henry VII (August 1313); the close sequence was widely viewed as a sign of divine judgment. According to Dante's Nicholas III (*Inf.* 19.73–84), both Boniface VIII ("he of Alagna") and Clement V are expected in the slot where Nicholas is planted upside down.

CANTO 31

In forma dunque di candida rosa
mi si mostrava la milizia santa
che nel suo sangue Cristo fece sposa,
ma l'altra, che volando vede e canta
la gloria di colui che la 'nnamora
e la Bontà che la fece cotanta,
sì come schiera d'ape che s'infiora
una fiata e una si ritorna
là dove suo laboro s'insapora,
nel gran fior discendeva che s'addorna
di tante foglie, e quindi risaliva
là dove 'l süo amor sempre soggiorna.
Le facce tutte avean di fiamma viva,
e ali d'oro, e l'altro tanto bianco
che nulla neve a quel termine arriva.
Quando scendean nel fior, di banco in banco
porgevan de la pace e de l'ardore
ch' elli acquistavan, ventilando il fianco,
né l'interporsi tra 'l disopra e 'l fiore
di tanta plenitudine volante
impediva la vista e lo splendore,
ché la luce divina è penetrante
per l'universo secondo ch' è degno,
sì che nulla le puote essere ostante.
Questo sicuro e gaudïoso regno,
frequente in gente antica e in novella,
viso e amore avea tutto ad un segno.
Oh trina Luce, che 'n unica stella
scintillando a lor vista, sì li appaga,
guarda qua giuso a la nostra procella!

CANTO 31

The Empyrean, continued: Beatrice replaced—the pilgrim's thanks to Beatrice—saint Bernard of Clairvaux—the blessed

In the form, then, of a white rose the holy
army was shown to me that Christ wedded with
his blood,
but the other, which flying sees and sings the
glory of him who enamors it and the Goodness
that made it so numerous,
like a swarm of bees that enflower themselves
at one moment and in the next return
where their labor ensavors itself,
was descending into the great flower that is
adorned with so many petals and was rising thence
back up to where its love always spends its day.
They all had faces of lively flame, wings of
gold, and the rest so white that no snow
reaches that limit.
When they came down into the flower, from
tier to tier they extended the peace and love
they acquired, fanning their wings,
nor did the interposition, between what was
above and the flower, of so great a flying plenitude,
impede the sight or the brightness,
for God's light is penetrative through the
universe according as this is worthy, so that
nothing can be an obstacle to it.
This secure and joyous kingdom, abounding
in people ancient and new, directed all its sight
and love toward one mark.
O triple Light, that in a single star, flashing in
their sight, fulfill them so, gaze down here at our
tempest!

Se i barbari, venendo da tal plaga
che ciascun giorno d'Elice si cuopra,
rotante col suo figlio, ond' ella è vaga,
veggendo Roma e l'ardüa sua opra,
stupefaciensi quando Laterano
a le cose mortali andò di sopra:
ïo, che al divino da l'umano,
a l'etterno dal tempo era venuto,
e di Fiorenza in popol giusto e sano,
di che stupor dovea esser compiuto?
Certo tra esso e 'l gaudio mi facea
libito non udire e starmi muto.
E quasi peregrin che si ricrea
nel tempio del suo voto riguardando,
e spera già ridir com' ello stea:
su per la viva luce passeggiando,
menava ïo li occhi per li gradi
mo sù, mo giù, e mo recirculando.
Vedëa visi a carità süadi—
d'altrui lume fregiati e di suo riso—
e atti ornati di tutte onestadi.
La forma general di Paradiso
già tutta mio sguardo avea compresa,
in nulla parte ancor fermato fiso,
e volgeami con voglia rïaccesa
per domandar la mia donna di cose
di che la mente mia era sospesa.
Uno intendëa, e altro mi rispuose:
credea veder Beatrice, e vidi un sene
vestito con le genti glorïose;
diffuso era per li occhi e per le gene
di benigna letizia, in atto pio
quale a tenero padre si convene.
E: "Ov' è ella?" sùbito diss' io.
Ond' elli: "A terminar lo tuo disiro
mosse Beatrice me del loco mio,
e se riguardi sù nel terzo giro
dal sommo grado, tu la rivedrai
nel trono che suoi merti le sortiro."

If the barbarians, coming from a clime that
Helice covers every day, revolving with the son
for whom she yearns,
seeing Rome and its lofty works, were
stupified when the Lateran surpassed all human
things:
I, who had come to the divine from the
human, to the eternal from time, and from
Florence to a people just and whole,
with what amazement must I be filled?
Certainly my amazement and rejoicing made
me happy to hear nothing and to be mute.
And like a pilgrim who refreshes himself,
gazing, in the temple of his vow, and hopes,
later, to relate what it is like:
strolling with my eyes up through the living
light, I directed them along the tiers, now up,
now down, and now circling back.
I saw faces won to love—adorned with
others' light and their own smiles—and
gestures beautiful with all serenity.
The general form of Paradise my gaze had
already fully grasped, not yet halting to be fixed
on any part,
and I was turning with rekindled desire to ask
my lady about things of which my mind was in
suspense.
I expected one thing, but another answered
me: I thought to see Beatrice, but I saw an old
man clothed like the glorious ones;
his eyes and cheeks were suffused with
benevolent rejoicing, his compassionate
bearing was such as befits a tender father.
And "Where is she?" I quickly said.
Wherefore he: "To bring your desire to its last
fulfillment, Beatrice has sent me from my place,
and if you look up in the third rank, you will
see her again upon the throne her merits have
allotted her."

Sanza risponder, li occhi sù levai,
e vidi lei che si facea corona
reflettendo da sé li etterni rai.
Da quella regïon che più sù tona
occhio mortale alcun tanto non dista,
qualunque in mare più giù s'abbandona,
quanto lì da Beatrice la mia vista,
ma nulla mi facea, ché süa effige
non discendëa a me per mezzo mista.
"O donna in cui la mia speranza vige
e che soffristi per la mia salute
in inferno lasciar le tue vestige:
di tante cose quant' i' ho vedute
dal tuo podere e da la tua bontate
riconosco la grazia e la virtute.
Tu m'hai di servo tratto a libertate
per tutte quelle vie, per tutt' i modi
che di ciò fare avei la potestate.
La tua magnificenza in me custodi,
sì che l'anima mia, che fatt' hai sana,
piacente a te dal corpo si disnodi."
Così orai, e quella, sì lontana
come parea, sorrise e riguardommi;
poi si tornò a l'etterna fontana.
E 'l santo sene: "Acciò che tu assommi
perfettamente," disse, "il tuo cammino,
a che priego e amor santo mandommi,
vola con li occhi per questo giardino,
ché veder lui t'acconcerà lo sguardo
più al montar per lo raggio divino.
E la regina del Cielo, ond' ïo ardo
tutto d'amor, ne farà ogne grazia,
però ch' i' sono il suo fedel Bernardo."
Qual è colui che forse di Croazia
viene a veder la Veronica nostra,
che per antica fame non sen sazia
ma dice nel pensier, fin che si mostra,
""Segnor mio Iesù Cristo, Dio verace,
or fu sì fatta la sembianza vostra?":

Without replying I lifted up my eyes, and I
saw her making herself a crown by reflecting
from herself the eternal rays.
From the region that thunders highest up, no
mortal eye is so distant, not one that is lost
deepest in the sea,
as was my gaze from Beatrice there, yet that
deprived me of nothing, for her image was not
descending to me mixed with any medium.
"O lady in whom my hope has strength and
who deigned for my salvation to leave your
footprints in Hell:
the grace and efficacy of all the things that I
have seen, I acknowledge to come from your
power and your goodness.
You have drawn me from slavery to liberty by
all those ways, by all the modes that you had
the power to use.
Preserve the great things you have done in
me, so that my soul, which you have made
whole, may be still pleasing to you when its knot
with the body is untied."
Thus I prayed, and she, distant as she
seemed, smiled and gazed at me; then she
turned back to the eternal Fountain.
And the holy old man: "That you may
perfectly complete your journey," he said, "for
which prayers and holy love have sent me,
fly with your eyes through this garden, for
seeing it will further strengthen your gaze to rise
into the divine light.
And the queen of Heaven, for whom I burn all in love,
will do us every grace, for I am her faithful Bernard."
As one who comes, perhaps from Croatia, to
see our Veronica, who because of his ancient
hunger is not sated
but says in his thought, as long as it is shown,
"My lord Jesus Christ, true God, now was your
face indeed like that?":

tal era io mirando la vivace
carità di colui che 'n questo mondo
contemplando gustò di quella pace.
"Figliuol di grazia, quest'esser giocondo,"
cominciò elli, "non ti sarà noto
tendendo li occhi pur qua giù al fondo,
ma guarda i cerchi infino al più remoto,
tanto che veggi seder la regina
cui questo regno è suddito e devoto."
Io levai li occhi, e come da mattina
la parte orïental de l'orizzonte
soverchia quella dove 'l sol declina:
così, quasi di valle andando a monte
con li occhi, vidi parte ne lo stremo
vincer di lume tutta l'altra fronte.
E come quivi ove s'aspetta il temo
che mal guidò Fetonte più s'infiamma,
e quinci e quindi il lume si fa scemo:
così quella pacifica oriafiamma
nel mezzo s'avvivava, e d'ogne parte
per igual modo allentava la fiamma.
E a quel mezzo con le penne sparte
vid' io più di mille angeli festanti,
ciascun distinto di fulgore e d'arte.
Vidi a lor giochi quivi e a lor canti
ridere una bellezza che letizia
era ne li occhi a tutti li altri santi,
e s' io avessi in dir tanta divizia
quanta ad imaginar, non ardirei
lo minimo tentar di sua delizia.
Bernardo, come vide li occhi miei
nel caldo suo caler fissi e attenti,
li suoi con tanto affetto volse a lei
che ' miei di rimirar fé più ardenti.

such was I, gazing at the lively charity of him
who in this world, contemplating, had tasted of
that peace.
"Son of grace, this joyous life," he began, "will
not be known to you, if you still keep your eyes
down here at the bottom;
but gaze on the circles, even the most
remote, until you see the throned queen to
whom this kingdom is subject and devoted."
I raised my eyes, and as in the morning the
eastern part of the horizon surpasses that
where the sun declines,
so, as if from a valley going up a mountainside
with my eyes, I saw a part in the highest that
surpassed with its light all the rest of that front.
And as in the place where we expect the
chariot that Phaethon guided ill, the sky is more
aflame and on this side and that the light is less:
so that peaceful oriflamme in the midst was
brightest, and in every direction the flame
lessened in equal degree.
And at that center I saw more than a
thousand rejoicing angels with outspread wings,
each one distinct in radiance and art.
There I saw smiling on their play and their
songs a beauty that gave gladness to the eyes
of all the other saints,
and had I as much wealth of speech as of
imagining I would not dare attempt the least of
her delightfulness.
Bernard, when he saw my eyes fixed and
attentive to his burning care, turned his
own toward her with so much love
that he made mine more ardent to gaze again.

NOTES

1–30. In the form . . . here at our tempest: The pilgrim views the first army of Heaven, human souls arrayed as a white rose (one terzina), tended to by the second army, angels compared to bees settling on flowers (seven terzinas). A return to the collectivity, and a final focus on the Trinity, one terzina apiece, makes ten in all. For the passage as a microcosm, and the simile at lines 4–12, see note below.

1–3. In the form . . . wedded with his blood: The army of the Church, "purchased with his own blood" by Christ (Acts 20.28; and see *Purg.* 27.1–5, 11.32–33 and notes); they form a white rose because their robes (see 30.129) have been made "white in the blood of the Lamb" (Apoc. 7.14).

4–24. but the other . . . an obstacle to it: The "descending" and "rising" of lines 10–11 reiterates the procession and return that organizes the cosmos; the descent "tier by tier" of lines 16–18 models the universal reach of God's light (lines 22–24). The angels in the Empyrean enact the bond between the angelic movers and the heavenly spheres (cf. 28.73–78 and note). Their activity resembles the industry of bees as noted by Pseudo-Anselm, who describes them "moving between heaven and earth, like hardworking bees between flowers and the hive" (*PL* 158.774). Vergil emphasizes the division of labor when comparing the building of Carthage to a hive (*Aen.* 1.430–34, 436):

> . . . some bring out
> the grown-up young, and others with flowing honey
> pack the cells, swelling them with sweet nectar,
> or receive the burdens of those returning. . . .
> The fragrant honeys are scented with thyme [*redolentque thymo*].

The earlier use of *redole*, uniquely in the poem, at 30.125 (cf. *redolent*, line 436, above) betrays Dante's awareness of Vergil's passage.

4–12. but the other . . . always spends its day: At *Aen.* 6.706–9 Vergil compares the souls in Elysium, thronging around the river Lethe, to swarming bees in a field; the passage includes terms (*volabant*, *insidunt*), assimilated here (lines 4, 7, 10) and elsewhere (*candida*, 30.1) into Dante's text:

> Unnumbered tribes and peoples were flying [*volabant*] around it,
> and just as bees in the meadows during summer's calm

> alight [*insidunt*] on various flowers and throng around white lilies, the whole plain buzzes with their murmur.

In the simile, the angels (line 4), the tenor of the comparison, are separated from the verbs for their activity (lines 10–11) by the vehicle of the comparison, the work of the bees (lines 7–9); to coordinate tenor with vehicle, the reader must follow the angels' descent and return (Lansing 1977).

4–6. but the other . . . that made it so numerous: As the pilgrim had earlier proclaimed his love of the God that made him (26.58–60 and notes), the angels praise the creator whose goodness made them innumerable (see *Aen.* 6.706, cited above); that they fly reflects their "active life" of ministering to the world (see *Conv.* 2.4.9–13), that they see and sing reflects their contemplation and praise of God.

After Beatrice's introduction of the rose as a vast city (30.130–32), references to the building of cities and the division of labor makes of the rose a polity, consonant with the "ordered civility" of the angelic hierarchies (*Conv.* 2.4.13); for the differentiation of human endowments for the sake of civic life on earth, see 8.97–136, 118–20 and notes, *Mon.* 2.6.5–6, and Additional Note 2.

7–9. like a swarm of bees . . . their labor ensavors itself: Gathered nectar becomes honey only when returned to the hive, that is, God (see *Aen.* 1.432–33, cited above). Both "enflower" [*infiora*, in this sense] and "ensavors" [*insapora*] follow the pattern of Dante's coinages with *in-* prefixes (see 4.28, 9.73–81 and notes). The Latinism *laboro* [labor] recalls how Aeneas's struggle to establish his people entailed *labores* [hard efforts] (*Aen.* 1.10).

13–15. They all had faces . . . reaches that limit: For the angels, Dante follows Ezek. 1.13 and Daniel 7.9 (and see Matt. 28.3). Gold and flame red are the colors of the Empyrean (whose fiery charity was represented in art with gilded mosaics and gold paint); white is the color of unsullied purity (*Mon.* 1.11.3); see note to line 127.

16–18. When they came down . . . fanning their wings: The apicultural sense of the angelic ministrations seems inverted: the angels draw from God and distribute to the souls, while bees take nectar from flowers to store in the hive. But see lines 7–9, and cf. 30.64–66 and note.

16–17. When they came down . . . the peace and love: Cf. *ST* 1a q. 106 a. 4: "The holy angels, who most fully participate in the divine goodness, impart to those below them whatever they perceive in God."

19–21. nor did the interposition . . . the sight or the brightness: Dante writes that angels "since they are without the rudeness of matter, are almost diaphanous because of the purity of their form" (*Conv.* 3.7.5).

22–24. for God's light is penetrative . . . an obstacle to it: Line 24, joined to the beginning of line 5, recomposes the first line of the *Paradiso*, another recapitulation in the Empyrean (see lines 1–24, 43–48 and notes).

25–30. This secure and joyous . . . down here at our tempest: Two groupings of souls, "ancient" and "new," are distinguished, to be explained in the next canto.

25. This secure and joyous realm: Compare 20.94, and see 32.117 and note. Ambrogio Lorenzetti's frescoes in the *palazzo pubblico* of Siena (1339–40) illustrate security [*securitas*] with an ideal city-state at peace; see Additional Note 2.

27. all its sight and love toward one mark: All focus on their sovereign, like Vergil's bees, "as long as the king is safe they are of one mind" [*rege incolumi mens omnibus una est*] (*Geor.* 4.212). See 32.61.

30. gaze down here at our tempest: Dante uses the same word for tempest [It. *procella*] that describes the storms [Lat. *procellis*] that strike Aeneas and his crew (*Aen.* 1.85, 5.791). For the apostrophe, cf. *Consol.* 1.m.5.42–43: "Look now on this wretched earth [*O iam miseras respice terras*], you who bind the world with laws!" (and see *Mon.* 1.16.4). The petition at line 30, echoing *Purg.* 6.118–20, seems stimulated by the vision of a peaceful polity, as in the earlier instance (cf. 6.76).

31–51. If the barbarians . . . with all serenity: The pilgrim is compared at lines 31–36 to Rome's invaders (perhaps Alaric's Goths, who sacked the city in 410 CE) gazing upon ancient Rome, and at lines 43–45 to a pilgrim who has reached the church he had vowed to visit; the two similes are mediated by the journey itself (lines 37–42). See also lines 103–8 and note.

31–36. If the barbarians . . . surpassed all human things: Commentators refer to the Trojans admiring "the towers and high-rising roofs of the Latins" in Evander's pre-Roman city (*Aen.* 7.160–61), but Aeneas and his men also admire the building of Carthage (*Aen.* 1.421): "Aeneas marvels at the huge works, once mere huts."

31–32. If the barbarians . . . for whom she yearns: Dante alludes to the constellations formed when the nymph Helice (also known as Callisto) and her

son by Jupiter, Arcas, who had both been changed into bears by a jealous Juno (see *Purg*. 25.130 and note), were placed by Jupiter in the heavens as Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, the Great and Little Bears. Wrathful Juno insisted the pair be banned from touching the sea, lest they pollute it (Ovid, *Met*. 2.401–507); thus the Great Bear never sets for latitudes above the fifty-fifth parallel. Its visibility at night all year long originally defined "barbarian," that is non-Latin-speaking, northern regions (see *Purg*. 1.23–24, 29–30 and notes).

33. revolving with the son for whom she yearns: That one constellation might "yearn" for another (Ursa Minor includes the pole star, a fixed point in the heavens) is not mere poetic ornament: it tropes in terms of pagan myth how the spheres are moved by the desire of the angels for God (see 1.76–77, 28.100–102 and notes).

34–36. seeing Rome . . . surpassed all human things: Dante here alludes to the wonders of ancient pagan and early Christian Rome, in disrepair in his own day. The Lateran Palace, confiscated by the emperor Nero from the patrician Laterani and acquired by the emperor Constantine in the fourth century, subsequently became a papal palace; it burned in 1308, after the papacy abandoned Rome.

37–39. I, who had come . . . just and whole: Three transitions in as many lines show that journey's end is near (cf. 32.139–41 and note). The first two are abstract and given in reverse order (from divine to human, eternal to temporal), while the third is historical and specific to the pilgrim, and in natural narrative order, combining the three results in a series of chiasmus. Greatest emphasis falls on Florence in line 39, so that its name resonates ironically within the Empyrean rose (see lines 10, 16, 19), and becomes synonymous with instability, injustice, and disease; cf. *Purg*. 6.127–51, *Par*. 15.97–99, 16.148–54 and notes.

37. I, who had come to the divine from the human: Dante emphasizes the first-person pronoun by requiring that it be bisyllabic (*ïo*), and by delaying the predicate of the sentence until line 40; the effect is to compress the whole journey into the clause modifying the subject pronoun, and thus back into the pronoun itself.

43–48. And like a pilgrim . . . and now circling back: The pilgrim's ocular tour of the spectacle before him, looking up, down, and around (cf. 21.37–39, and note to 21.40–42) recapitulates his descending, circling, and rising motions over the whole poem (cf. 24.62–63, 33.22–23 and notes). He is like the pilgrim in the simile, for all Christians are pilgrims in this life (cf. 2 Cor. 5.6–7; Heb.

11.13, 1 Peter 2.11; and *Purg*. 13.94–96, 23.16–21; *Par*. 6.127–42 and notes); and he is represented as a pilgrim during the journey (cf. *Purg*. 2.63, 27.110–11; and *Par*. 1.51 and notes). For emphasis on the eye (and head) see Additional Note 14.

45. and hopes, later, to relate what it is like: The pilgrim is a witness who will soon relate his vision to others—that is, write the poem (see also lines 103–11). For "relate," "retell," see *Inf*. 1.10, *Par*. 1.5–6, and *VN* 41.12.

46–48. walking with my eyes . . . now circling back: Compare *Aen*. 8.310–11, describing the future site of Rome: "Aeneas, wondering, looked all around with quick eyes [*oculos fert omnia circum*]." See lines 97 and 112–42, especially 121–22.

49–51. I saw faces . . . with all serenity: The embodied appearance of the blessed (30.44–45) means the pilgrim can perceive faces, essential to the action of this and the following cantos (cf. lines 59–63, 92, 103–8; and see 32.46–48, 85–87).

52–93. The general form . . . the eternal Fountain: The middle part of the canto relates the last change of guides in the poem, left unforeseen in the first canto of the poem (see *Inf*. 1.120–26 and notes). For the fountain, see note to 30.67, John 4.14, and "O qui perpetua," line 23 ("the fountain of the Good [*fons . . . boni*]").

55–60. and I was turning . . . the glorious ones: At *Purg*. 30.43–54, the pilgrim "turned to the left" to announce to Virgil his rekindled love at the return of Beatrice, only to find him gone, but Beatrice still present; here he "was turning" to Beatrice, and finds instead an aged man. Though the pilgrim's keen sorrow at Virgil's departure is not repeated here in regard to Beatrice, parallels between the two passages attest to the status of the new guide: only Virgil, Beatrice, and this guide are ever *sole* companions of the pilgrim, and this guide presides over a crucial, final phase of the journey. But see Botterill 1994.

59–63. I saw an old man . . . a tender father: "Old man" [*sene*, a Latinism], is used in the poem only in this canto, rhyming with *gene* [cheek, another Latinism], in 61; *sene* is repeated at line 94. Like the other souls in the Empyrean, the old man appears possessed of his glorified body (the "second stole;" see 25.122–29 and note). For the issue raised here, see 32.46–48 and note.

61–63. his eyes and cheeks . . . a tender father: The old man's visage recalls Cato, the custodian of Purgatory (*Purg*. 1.31–33 and note, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 1), while his gestures evoke Cacciaguida, the poet's ancestor

(15.25–27 and note); his paternal solicitude recalls Virgil (*Purg*. 30.49–54 and note). As the old man proves to have been an abbot in life, his paternal role was an institutional one ("abbot" is derived from Aramaic *abba* [father]).

64–69. And where is she . . . have allotted her: Though unmentioned in Beatrice's exposition to Virgil of the celestial beings who intervene on the pilgrim's behalf (*Inf*. 2.52–117 and note), the old man presents himself as Beatrice's emissary. See also lines 94–96, and Additional Note 1.

64–65. And where is she I quickly said: The pilgrim's bald first question of his new guide is a fine comic touch. The pronouns in lines 64–65 emphasize the gender difference of the guides; in order to fill out the Italian hendecasyllable, the contiguous vowels must be kept distinct (hiatus): "E:|'Ov' è | ella, subito diss' ïo": the fragmented line expresses the pilgrim's tentativeness.

70–78. Without replying . . . mixed with any medium: Beatrice in the rose is undimmed and unblurred by distance, because there is no intervening medium (on earth, the sphere of air) to limit the acuity of his sight; the pilgrim sees her as if she were next to him. Cf. 29.25–27, 30.115–23 and notes.

70–72. Without replying . . . the eternal rays: See Psalm 120.1 ("I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains"; cf. 25.34, and *Inf*. 1.16). Beatrice's crown is like a halo; it is the reflection of the light of glory shining on her, recalling that Beatrice, like the angels (29.142–44 and note) is a mirror, reflecting God's light through her eyes (see *Purg*. 31.80–81, 119–21; *Par*. 1.64–66 and note).

73–76. From the region . . . from Beatrice there: From the sea bottom to the summit of the sphere of air (the atmosphere). Although it is traversed in three cantos, the Empyrean appears much more vast than the physical world of the elements. For other perspectives from the sea bottom, cf. 1.67–69, 33.94–96.

79–90. O lady in whom my hope . . . with the body is untied: For the form of the prayer, see notes to "O qui perpetua," lines 26–28. The prayer recapitulates the poet's career, and the poem's journey; De Robertis 2001 cites as a model Psalm 70, especially lines 8–9, 18, 20–21; see also *Purg*. 30.83–84.

The pilgrim, who has previously used the honorific pronoun *voi* to address Beatrice (see the note to 4.138), adopts the familiar singular form (*tu*), as usual when addressing a saint or deity (see 16.10–12 and note; 33.1–39; also "O qui perpetua," lines 10, 13, 18, 21; and see Additional Note 1). Dante prays to his lady without idolatry (line 91), since she is, though by his authority alone, his saint in Heaven.

79–81. O lady . . . footprints in Hell: Beatrice's descent to Hell partly reiterated that of Christ, whose footprints were left on earth when he ascended to Heaven (*Golden Legend*, Chapter 72). See also Ps. 70.20, "Thou hast brought me back again [*iterum reduxisti me*] from the depths of the earth [*de abyssis terrae*]." Cf. *Inf.* 2.82–114, *Purg.* 30.139–41 and notes.

82–84. the grace and efficacy . . . your power and your goodness: The poet's gratitude here parallels that directed at his native constellation (see 22.112–23 and note). Beatrice's attributes recall those of the Trinity (see *Inf.* 3.5–6 and note).

85–87. You have drawn me . . . the power to use: "Slavery" and "liberty" align Beatrice's rescue of the pilgrim with the terms of Ps. 113, *In exitu Israel de Aegypto*, as interpreted in *Ep.* 13.21 (see *Purg.* 2.46–48 and note and our introduction to *Purgatorio*, p. 13). Line 86 echoes God's use of all possible means for working the redemption of man (7.109–11; see note). Beatrice's deed is like the victory over death of Christ himself.

88. Preserve the great things you have done in me: See Ps. 70.21: "Thou hast multiplied thy magnificence"; also 17.88–90.

89. so that my soul, which you have made whole: See Ps. 70.23, "My soul which thou hast redeemed." Beatrice extends the redemptive action of Christ, healing the wound inflicted by sin on Adam (see 32.4–6 and note). For "whole" [*sano*] see also line 39 and 33.35–36, and especially Virgil's crowning of the pilgrim once his will is "free, upright, and whole [*sano*]" (*Purg.* 27.140).

92. gazed at me: In the context of the pilgrim's future death (lines 89–90), De Robertis 2001 observes that "gazed at me" [*riguardommi*] echoes Dante's rendering of Pyramus's dying gaze at Thisbe [*riguardolla*], invoked to describe how the pilgrim's fear of passing the fire—likened to the fear of death—is overcome by hearing Beatrice named. See *Purg.* 27.37–42 with note, and 1.

94–142. And the holy old man . . . ardent to gaze again: The gradual approach to the final vision will require viewing the ranks of the rose (lines 94–99; see the next canto). Bernard prepares the pilgrim's vision for the deepest mysteries of the faith (lines 103–11); he invites the pilgrim to raise his eyes to Mary, who awaits his petition (lines 112–17); at the crest of the rose, she receives the homage of the angels (lines 124–35); but her beauty is beyond description (lines 136–38).

94–102. And the holy old man . . . I am her faithful Bernard: Only now does Bernard of Clairvaux reveal his name. Born of a noble family at Château Fontaines, in Burgundy, in 1091, Bernard joined the newly founded reformist

monastery of Cîteaux in 1113 after studying in Paris. Soon afterward he was chosen by Stephen Harding, the third abbot, to expand the reach of the reformed Benedictines (known, after the name of their abbey, as Cistercians) by founding a new abbey at Clairvaux, in Champagne, the first of some sixty-five that Bernard personally helped establish. Bernard's prestige grew when he settled a disputed papal election; the next pope elected, Eugenius III, was a disciple of his. At the Council of Sens in 1141, the logician and theologian Peter Abelard was condemned at Bernard's instigation for heretical writings regarding the Trinity. In 1144, at Vézelay in Burgundy, Bernard preached the Second Crusade, which was led by Louis VII and Conrad III (1147–49; see 15.139–41 and note). Bernard never recovered from the disastrous failure of the crusade, and he died on 20 August 1153; he was canonized in 1173.

Bernard was celebrated for his eloquence as a preacher and writer; his most famous works are the *Sermons on Canticles* [*Sermones in Cantica canticorum*] and his treatise *On Loving God* [*De diligendo Deo*], which manifests the exclusively mystical, affective focus of Cistercian spirituality. The extent of Dante's direct knowledge of Bernard's works is debated. The only work of Bernard cited by Dante (*Ep.* 13.80) is *De consideratione*, on the contemplative ascent to God; it is Bernard's last work, addressed to Pope Eugenius III. See Botterill 1994.

97–99. fly with your eyes . . . into the divine light: Emphasized again is the visual—that is, the intellectual—nature of the pilgrim's journey. Compare 1.49–54 and note. These verses are part of a series (line 46, "walk;" line 97, "fly;" line 121, "ascend") that diagrams the course of the pilgrim's eye around the Empyrean.

100–102. And the queen of heaven . . . I am her faithful Bernard: Dante chooses Bernard as the final guide because of Bernard's devotion to the Virgin Mary, evident in the sermons and prayers attributed to him, although, like the Dominicans, he did not accept the claims made for her immaculate conception.

103–11. As one who comes . . . had tasted of that peace: The wayfarer's amazement at seeing Bernard is like that of a pilgrim who sees a faithful image of Christ's face. Bernard's experience as a contemplative may have enhanced his resemblance to Christ. This passage again relies on the provision at 30.43–45.

103–4. As one who comes . . . to see our Veronica: In Dante's day pilgrims went to Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome to venerate the image of the face of Christ kept there (see *VN* 40.1: "That blessed image Christ left to us as the

exemplar of his beautiful features" [*figura*]). The *Golden Legend* (Chapter 53) relates that to fulfill the request of a woman named Veronica, Christ left his image on a painter's canvas; another tradition explained the image as left on the cloth [*sudarium*] on which Christ wiped from his face the tears, turned to blood, in Gethsemane (Luke 22.44). Villani (9.36) reports that during the jubilee of 1300, the image was shown on every Friday and every solemn feast day; it was traditionally displayed during Lent, on Ascension and on Sundays after the octave of Epiphany (Lloyd 1994). The name Veronica (a form of the Greek name Berenike, that is, Berenice) was interpreted to mean *vera icona* [true image], thus Dante's *verace* in line 107.

Dante imagines first a barbarian in Rome (lines 31–36), then a pilgrim in the temple of his vow (lines 43–45), and last the relic itself with Christ's image—each stage closer to the ultimate sight "face to face."

103. As one who comes, perhaps, from Croatia: The commentators agree that "Croatia" names a generically remote location. Thirteenth-century Croatia had a hundred Benedictine monasteries, and was unique in Europe in that its vernacular liturgy (Old Slavonic) was used with papal approval (1248); Dante may have imagined it as a country of intense religiosity, thus a source of pilgrims.

111. contemplating had tasted of that peace: Dante attributes to Bernard while still in this life the vision of the blessed and "the peace which passeth understanding" (cf. 10.129; 15.148). Bernard never claims in his writings to have enjoyed the intellectual vision of God; he describes an exclusively affective experience of union with God.

112–42: Son of grace . . . ardent to gaze again: Six of ten uses of "eye" or "eyes" in the canto are in this ten-terzina section, matched by eight verbs of looking or seeing. Dante uses "eyes" [*occhi*] twenty-five times in the Empyrean, and almost one hundred times in *Paradiso*. See notes to lines 43–48, 70–72, 97–99.

118–38. I raised my eyes . . . the least of her delightfulness: Climbing from a valley to a mountain recapitulates the journey, here performed with the eyes (see 33.22–24 and note; Ps. 120.1). This second triumph of Mary (cf. 23.88–111 and note, 32.88–114, and note to 32.94–114) is the climax of the canto.

118–20. I raised my eyes . . . where the sun declines: The penultimate occasion in the poem when the appearance of a celestial being is compared to a sunrise (see 32.106–8, also of Mary); Mary is described liturgically as *Aurora consurgens* [the morning sun rising] (Canticle of Canticles 6.9); see 30.1–9, and 23.7–9 and notes.

124–29. And as in the place . . . in equal degree: The last reference in the poem to Phaethon, adapting Ovid's account there of the rising sun (esp. *Met*. 2.105–18). See 17.1–6, *Inf*. 17.106–11, *Purg*. 4.71–72 and notes, and Additional Note 7.

124–25. the chariot that Phaethon guided ill: Dante has *temo*, which tropes the chariot with the cross-shaped pole or tongue used to pull it (see *Purg*. 32.140, 144); cf. Ovid's *temo aureus* [golden pole] (*Met*. 2.107).

127. so that peaceful oriflamme: This is Charlemagne's battle standard, mentioned in the *Chanson de Roland* (*l'orieflambe*, line 3093) as once belonging to saint Peter (thus possibly the Roman standard that Pope Leo III sent to Charlemagne in 796); or perhaps the later *oriflamme* associated with the Abbey of St. Denis and the Capetian dynasty, which remained the battle standard of the French monarchy until the defeats at Poitiers and Agincourt in the fifteenth century. The exact appearance of the flag is disputed, though the derivation of its name from Lat. *aurea flamma*, "golden fire," suggests a combination of red and gold. Canticle of Canticles 6.9 ("terrible as an army set in array") was applied to Mary; as an *oriflamme*, she is the rallying point of the Christian army (see 6.94–102 and note to 6.100–102).

130–32. And at that center . . . in radiance and art: For Gabriel's devotion to Mary, see 23.103–11, 32.109–14 and notes. The angels are distinct in brightness because each is a distinct species; "art" refers to their ministration and praise.

CANTO 32

Affetto al suo piacer, quel contemplante
libero officio di dottore assunse,
e cominciò queste parole sante:
"La piaga che Maria richiuse e unse,
quella ch' è tanto bella da' suoi piedi
è colei che l'aperse e che la punse.
Ne l'ordine che fanno i terzi sedi,
siede Rachèl di sotto da costei
con Bëatrice, sì come tu vedi.
Sarra e Rebecca, Iudìt e colei
che fu bisava al cantor che per doglia
del fallo disse: '*Miserere mei*,'
puoi tu veder così di soglia in soglia
giù digradar, com' io ch' a proprio nome
vo per la rosa giù di foglia in foglia.
E dal settimo grado in giù, sì come
infino ad esso, succedono Ebree,
dirimendo del fior tutte le chiome;
perché, secondo lo sguardo che fée
la fede in Cristo, queste sono il muro
a che si parton le sacre scalee.
Da questa parte, onde 'l fiore è maturo
di tutte le sue foglie, sono assisi
quei che credettero in Cristo venturo;
da l'altra parte, onde sono intercisi
di vòti i semicirculi, si stanno
quei ch' a Cristo venuto ebber li visi.
E come quinci il gloriöso scanno
de la Donna del Cielo e li altri scanni
di sotto lui cotanta cerna fanno,

CANTO 32

The Empyrean, continued: the ranks of the blessed: Hebrew women and men—Christian women and men—infants—the Virgin Mary and Gabriel, Adam, saint Peter, Moses, saint Anna, saint Lucy

Fixed on his pleasure, that contemplative
freely assumed the office of teacher, and he
began these holy words:

"The wound that Mary closed and anointed,
that soul so beautiful at her feet is she who
opened and inflicted it.

Below her, in the third tier of seats, sits
Rachel with Beatrice, as you see.

Sarah and Rebecca, Judith, and her who was
great-grandmother to the singer who, grieving at
his sin, said: '*Miserere mei*,'

you can see, following each other down tier
by tier, as I with the name of each go from petal
down to petal in the rose.

And from the seventh degree downward, as
down to it, there follow Hebrew women, parting
all the hairs of the flower,

because, according to the direction looked in
by their faith in Christ, these are the wall where
the sacred stairways divide.

On this side, where the flower is mature with
all its petals, are seated those who believed in
Christ to come;

on the other side, where the semicircles
are interrupted by vacancies, are those
who had their faces turned toward Christ
already come.

And, as on this side the glorious throne of the
Lady of Heaven and the others beneath it make
so great a division,

così di contra quel del gran Giovanni
che sempre santo 'l diserto e 'l martiro
sofferse, e poi l'inferno da due anni,
e sotto lui così cerner sortiro
Francesco, Benedetto e Agostino,
e altri fin qua giù di giro in giro.
Or mira l'alto proveder divino:
ché l'uno e l'altro aspetto de la fede
igualmente empierà questo giardino.
E sappi che dal grado in giù che fiede
a mezzo il tratto le due discrezioni,
per nullo proprio merito si siede,
ma per l'altrui, con certe condizioni:
ché tutti questi son spiriti asciolti
prima ch' avesser vere elezioni.
Ben te ne puoi accorger per li volti
e anche per le voci püerili,
se tu li guardi bene e se li ascolti.
Or dubbi tu e dubitando sili,
ma io discioglierò 'l forte legame
in che ti stringon li pensier sottili.
Dentro a l'ampiezza di questo reame
casüal punto non puote aver sito,
se non come tristizia o sete o fame,
ché per etterna legge è stabilito
quantunque vedi, sì che giustamente
ci si risponde da l'anello al dito;
e però questa festinata gente
a vera vita non è *sine causa*
intra sé qui più e meno eccellente.
Lo rege per cui questo regno pausa—
in tanto amore e in tanto diletto
che nulla volontà è di più ausa—
le menti tutte nel suo lieto aspetto
creando, a suo piacer di grazia dota
diversamente, e qui basti l'effetto.
E ciò espresso e chiaro vi si nota
ne la Scrittura santa, in quei gemelli
che ne la madre ebber l'ira commota;

so, opposite, the throne of the great John
who, ever holy, suffered the wilderness and
martyrdom and then Hell for two years,
and below him in the same way Francis,
Benedict, and Augustine have been assigned to
divide, and others down to here from circle to
circle.
Behold now God's high foresight: for the two
gazes of the faith will equally fill this garden.
And know that down from the degree that
strikes the midpoint of the two divisions, sit
souls that have no merit of their own
but that of others, with certain conditions: for
all these are spirits absolved before they had
true power of choice.
You can perceive it well by their faces and
their childish voices, if you look well and listen to
them.
Now you have a doubt and are silent in your
doubt, but I will untie the strong bonds with
which your subtle thoughts are gripping you.
Within this ample kingdom no effect of
chance can have a place, no more than
sadness or thirst or hunger,
for eternal law establishes whatever you see,
so that here there is an exact fit between ring
and finger;
and therefore this people that has hastened
to the true life is not *sine causa* more and less
excellent among themselves here.
The King through whom this kingdom
reposes—in so much love and so much delight
that no will has ever experienced more—
creating all minds for the joyful sight of him, at
his pleasure endows them with grace differently,
and here let the effect suffice.
And this is noted expressly and clearly for you
in Holy Scripture, in those twins whose anger
was aroused while still within their mother;

però secondo il color d'i capelli
di cotal grazia l'altissimo lume
degnamente convien che s'incappelli.
Dunque sanza mercé di lor costume
locati son per gradi differenti,
sol differendo nel primo acume.
Bastavasi ne' secoli recenti
con l'innocenza, per aver salute,
solamente la fede d'i parenti;
poi che le prime etadi fuor compiute,
convenne ai maschi a l'innocenti penne
per circuncidere acquistar virtute.
Ma poi che 'l tempo de la grazia venne,
sanza battesmo perfetto di Cristo
tale innocenza là giù si ritenne.
Riguarda omai ne la faccia che a Cristo
più si somiglia, ché la sua chiarezza
sola ti può disporre a veder Cristo."
Io vidi sopra lei tanta allegrezza
piover, portata ne le menti sante
create a trasvolar per quella altezza,
che quantunque io avea visto davante
di tanta ammirazion non mi sospese
né mi mostrò di Dio tanto sembiante.
E quello amor che primo lì discese,
cantando: "*Ave, Maria, gratïa plena*,"
dinanzi a lei le sue ali distese.
Rispuose a la divina cantilena
da tutte parti la beata corte,
sì ch'ogne vista sen fé più serena.
"O santo padre, che per me comporte
l'esser qua giù, lasciando il dolce loco
nel qual tu siedi per etterna sorte,
qual è quell'angel che con tanto gioco
guarda ne li occhi la nostra regina,
innamorato sì che par di foco?"
Così ricorsi ancora a la dottrina
di colui ch' abelliva di Maria
come del sole stella mattutina.

70 therefore, according to the color of the hair of each one's grace, as is fitting, they take their wreathes of highest Light.

73 Thus, without any merit from their conduct, they are placed in different tiers, differing only in their first acumen.

76 In the earliest centuries the faith of the parents alone, along with innocence, was enough to bring salvation;

79 after the first ages were completed, males were required to acquire power for their innocent wings by circumcision.

82 But once the time of grace arrived, without perfect baptism in Christ such innocence has been detained below.

85 Look now at the face that most resembles Christ, for its brightness alone can enable you to see Christ."

88 I saw so much joy raining upon her, carried in the holy minds created to soar through that altitude,

91 that all I had seen before had not suspended me in so much admiration, nor shown me anything more resembling God.

94 And the love that first descended there, singing "*Ave, Maria, gratia plena*," had spread forth his wings before her.

97 On every side the blessed court answered the divine cantilena, so that every eye became brighter because of it.

100 "O holy father, who for my sake endure being here below, leaving the sweet place where you sit by your eternal lot,

103 which is that angel who so joyously is gazing into the eyes of our queen, so filled with love that he seems of fire?"

106 Thus I appealed again to the teaching of him who was made beautiful by Mary, as by the sun the morning star.

Ed elli a me: "Baldezza e leggiadria
quant' esser puote in angelo e in alma
tutta è in lui, e sì volem che sia,
perch' elli è quelli che portò la palma
giuso a Maria quando 'l Figliuol di Dio
carcar si volse de la nostra salma.
Ma vieni omai con li occhi sì com' io
andrò parlando, e nota i gran patrici
di questo imperio giustissimo e pio.
Quei due che seggon là sù più felici,
per esser propinquissimi ad Agusta,
son d'esta rosa quasi due radici:
colui che da sinistra le s'aggiusta
è 'l padre per lo cui ardito gusto
l'umana specie tanto amaro gusta;
dal destro vedi quel padre vetusto
di santa Chiesa a cui Cristo le chiavi
raccomandò di questo fior venusto.
E quei che vide tutt' i tempi gravi,
pria che morisse, de la bella sposa
che s'acquistò con la lancia e coi clavi
siede lungh' esso, e lungo l'altro posa
quel duca sotto cui visse di manna
la gente ingrata, mobile e retrosa.
Di contr' a Pietro vedi sedere Anna,
tanto contenta di mirar sua figlia
che non move occhio per cantare osanna,
e contro al maggior padre di famiglia
siede Lucia, che mosse la tua donna
quando chinavi a rovinar le ciglia.
Ma perché 'l tempo fugge che t'assonna
qui farem punto, come buon sartore
che com' elli ha del panno fa la gonna,
e drizzeremo li occhi al primo amore,
sì che guardando verso lui penètri
quant' è possibil per lo suo fulgore.

And he to me: "Boldness and joy, as great as
can be in either angel or human soul, are all in
him, and thus we wish it to be,
for he is the one who carried down the palm
to Mary, when the Son of God wished to burden
himself with our flesh.
But come along now with your eyes as I go
speaking, and note the great patricians of this
most just and merciful empire.
Those two who sit happiest up there, being nearest
to Augusta, are as it were two roots of this rose:
the one who is just to her left is that father for
whose bold taste the human race tastes so
much bitterness;
on her right behold that ancient father of Holy
Church to whom Christ entrusted the keys to
this lovely flower.
And he who saw, before he died, all the
heavy times of the lovely bride who was bought
with the spear and the nails,
sits alongside him, and next to the other rests
the leader under whom the ungrateful, fickle,
back-sliding people lived on manna.
Opposite Peter see Anna sit, so happy to
gaze on her daughter that she does not move
her eyes, though singing hosanna,
and opposite that greatest father of the family
sits Lucy, who sent your lady when you bent
your brow to fall.
But because the time is fleeting that holds
you asleep, here we will make an end, like a
good tailor who makes the garment according to
the cloth he has,
and we will direct our eyes to the first Love,
so that, gazing toward him, you may penetrate
as far as possible into his radiance.

Veramente, *ne* forse tu t'arretri
movendo l'ali tue, credendo oltrarti,
orando grazia conven che s'impetri,
grazia da quella che puote aiutarti;
e tu mi seguirai con l'affezione
sì che dal dicer mio lo cor non parti."
E cominciò questa santa orazione:

Truly, lest perhaps you fly backward moving
your wings, believing you move forward, we
must gain grace by praying,
grace from her who can help you, and you
shall follow me with your love, so that your heart
will not depart from my words."
And he began this holy prayer:

NOTES

1–3. Fixed on his pleasure . . . these holy words: As the commentators observe, "pleasure" refers to Mary, the object of Bernard's devotion; the lines also refer to his fame as a contemplative, and his eloquence as a preacher and teacher of his monks (for whom he wrote the sermons on the Canticle of Canticles and his other works): they summarize his reputation. In his "office of teacher" Bernard acts like a university lecturer imparting doctrine (see 24.46–51 and note).

3. holy words: "holy" is used frequently in this canto: see lines 32, 68, 89, 100, and, at 151, the "holy prayer," referring to the next canto.

4–138. The wound that Mary closed . . . bent your brow to fall: The arrangement of souls in the "merciful empire" (line 117) of the rose derives from the major phases of salvation history (lines 4–6, 76–84): mentioned are the communities of faith before and after Christ (37–39); the two cities, of the saved and the reprobate (implied at lines 67–69); the genealogy of Christ (10–12); the Incarnation (lines 94–96, 113–14), Crucifixion (127–29), and Apocalypse (implied in lines 37–39). The pilgrim's rescue at the beginning of the poem (lines 136–38) follows mention of the Exodus from Egypt (lines 130–32).

4–84. The wound that Mary closed . . . detained below: Bernard explains that the rose is divided vertically (lines 13–18, 31–36) between those who believe in Christ already come and those who believed in Christ yet to come (lines 19–27, 37–39), and also horizontally: below are children who owe their places to the merits of others (lines 40–48); they too have distinct degrees of beatitude (lines 52–84). For the further articulations of the rose, see note to lines 22–36.

4–39. The wound that Mary closed . . . equally fill this garden: The two groups of the blessed face each other, as if the two halves of a hemisphere; numbers on the two sides are nearly the same, but some seats remain unfilled among those who believe in Christ already come (lines 25–26): some time remains before the Last Judgment. Dante recalls at *Conv.* 3.7.5 the idea that God made man in order to replace the tally of fallen angels, placing a limit on the souls destined for Heaven (144,000, according to Apoc. 7.4–8).

4–18. The wound that Mary closed . . . the hairs of the flower: The first vertical group, the "wall" (line 20) descending from Mary in the top rank

through the first seven tiers, is of OT matriarchs and heroines; and from there downward, additional Hebrew women. The idea that the "hairs" of the rose, referring to the blessed, its "petals," are divided (or parted) suggests an image of the Empyrean as a head (Alain de Lille gives personified Nature a coiffure articulated and adorned like the heavens in the first prose section of his *Plaint of Nature*). For the importance of the head, see Additional Note 14.

4–6. The wound that Mary closed . . . opened and inflicted it: Human nature was wounded by the sin of Eve and healed by the son of Mary (the pithy "that one struck the blow, this one healed it" [*illa percussit, ista sanavit*] is found in several sermons attributed to Augustine). See Rom. 5.19: "For as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just." Christian salvation history is compressed into three lines.

Benvenuto noted that since wounds are medicated before they close, and inflicted before being opened, the actions of Eve and of Mary are given in reverse order [*hysteron proteron*]; a reversal of temporal order and causation also puts Mary before Eve, and above her (line 5): Redemption, the ultimate goal, is logically prior to the Fall that set in motion God's plan (juxtaposing Alpha and O; see Additional Note 14). For the wound of nature in the pilgrim, see 31.88–89, *Inf.* 1.30 and notes.

7–39. Below her . . . equally fill this garden: The Empyrean is seen simultaneously as a flower (line 15), a garden (39), and an amphitheater, with ascending ranks of seats (lines 7, 13–14, 16, 20–21), which modifies the image of the ladder (see 22.68). Buti thought of the Roman arena of Verona; the Roman Colosseum is also a possible reference; see figure 9. Dante knew from Isidore of Seville (*Etym.* 18.42) that the word for "theater" derived from the Greek word for "gazing" [*theoría*].

7–9. Below her . . . Rachel with Beatrice, as you see: Below the mother of God and the mother of humankind sits Rachel, wife of Jacob (Israel) and mother of Joseph and his brothers (patriarchs of the twelve tribes), and thus of the Jews as the chosen people (see *Inf.* 4.59–60 and note); to her right is Beatrice. In the third dream of *Purgatorio*, Rachel prefigures Beatrice (27.100–108; see notes).

10–12. Sarah and Rebecca . . . *Miserere mei* [have mercy on me]: OT Hebrew women with faith (see Heb. 11.11–12; Rom. 9.8–13): Sarah was wife to Abraham, with whom God made a covenant (see note to lines 76–84), promising to

multiply his seed; she gave birth late in life to Isaac (Gen.17.15–21; 21.1–3); Rebecca, Isaac's wife, bore Jacob and Esau (Gen. 25.19–25; see lines 67–69); next is Judith, the virtuous widow who saved Israel by seducing and beheading Nebuchadnezzar's general Holofernes (Judith 8–16, esp. 15.10; see *Purg*. 12.58–60 and notes; and see *Purg*. 29.85–86 and note, for her relation to the cult of Mary). Named last is Ruth the Moabite, first a widow, then wife of Boaz, father of Obed, father of Jesse, father of David (Ruth 4); along with Eve, Ruth and David are named through periphrasis. Ruth anchors the Jewish genealogies to the ancestry of Christ, whose descent from Jesse is spelled out in Matt. 1.1–17 and represented visually in the Jesse tree (a feature of illustrated Bibles; see note to *Purg*. 7.121). As mother to the twelve tribes, and because of her relation to contemplation and to Beatrice, Rachel has pride of place among the matriarchs.

12. *Miserere mei*: These words from the third verse of Psalm 50 are quoted and echoed by the pilgrim's first words in the poem, spoken to Virgil (see *Inf*. 1.63)—another instance of first and last, Alpha and O. The psalm was traditionally held to have been written by King David to atone for his love of Bathsheba, wife of Uriah the Hittite, sent by David to die in battle in order to make possible the king's marriage with his widow (2 Kings 11–12; see 20.37–42, *Purg*. 10.55–69 and notes). This is the last of several uses of this psalm in the poem (*Purg*. 5.24, 31.98; *Par*. 14.88–93 and notes); along with *Ave Maria* and *Hosanna* (also mentioned in this canto), Psalm 50 is the most frequently used liturgical element in the poem.

11–12. grieving at his sin: Dante's word for David's "sin," *fallo*, is the same word used of the "first fault written down" of Guinevere (16.15 and note).

19–39. because, according to the direction . . . fill this garden: Like the presence in the Heaven of Justice of souls who believed in Christ's feet yet to suffer [*passuri*] and which had suffered [*passi*](see 20.100–105; also 19.103–5 and notes), the division of Dante's Empyrean into two groups is expressed in grammatically coordinated terms, a future participle, *venturo* [to come] in line 24, and a past participle, *venuto* [already come] in line 27, given in reversed temporal order (see note to lines 4–6). See Additional Note 4.

21. where the sacred stairways divide: The Jewish matriarchs and the heroic Judith define one limit within the rose; line 17 indicates that the vertical line of seats goes to the bottom and center of the rose (where the pilgrim stands with Bernard, looking up); this means the two "seams" also delimit two sides of the lower half (see lines 40–84). The claim that the upper register is complete

with seven rows, with an equal number in the lower register, giving a total of fourteen rows for the rose, cannot be reconciled with the vast distance said to separate the pilgrim from Beatrice as he stands at the bottom of the rose (31.73–76 and note). "More than a thousand tiers" [*soglie*] at 30.113 must refer to ranks, not individual seats.

22–36. On this side . . . from circle to circle: In the other half of the rose are souls who believe in Christ after his Advent. Defining the limit of this region, in the row opposite that of the Hebrew women, is found John the Baptist, directly across from Mary, under whom, in descending degrees, are located Francis (cf. 11.43–75), Benedict (cf. 22.37–42) and Augustine.. See figure 8.

22–25. On this side . . . on the other side: Bernard indicates the near side, his right, and a far side, to his left; if he faces the "wall" of Hebrew women, this means that the group who believed before Christ are to Mary's left, and the group who believed after Christ to her right, perhaps the "better" side.

25–26. where the semicircles are interrupted by vacancies: If the ranks are semicircles, then the rose is hemispheric; Lana terms it a *scudella* [bowl]; see lines 7–39, 30.115–17 and notes. See figure 9.

31–33. so, opposite . . . Hell for two years: This is John the Baptist, the herald of Christ, "ever holy" because he is "filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1.15). Martyred by decapitation twenty months before the Crucifixion, he descended to Limbo, where according to the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus he preached the imminent descent of Christ to the ancient just. The lives of the Baptist and his counterpart Mary span the transition from the time before Christ to the time after: John is traditionally the last prophet of Christ, and his baptism, of water only, the intermediary rite between circumcision and Christ's baptism; see lines 76–84. For the Baptist as patron saint of Florence, a role he shares with the Virgin Mary, see *Inf*. 13.143–44; *Par*. 16.25–27, 40–42, 46–47 and notes.

34–35. and below him . . . Benedict and Augustine: A column of "fathers" of the Church complement the matriarchs opposite. All the "fathers" in this-group promulgated a rule of religious life; the same group (along with Dominic) is at *Conv*. 4.28.9. As a founder of Cistercian houses, Bernard's place, from which he departs to guide the pilgrim [31.65–66] is perhaps in this column (Picone in *LDT* Canto 32) Placement of monastic founders beneath John reflects the austere life of the Baptist as a desert hermit (line 32; see *Purg*. 22.151–54 and note).

After the Fourth Lateran council in 1215 discouraged new monastic rules, Augustine's rule, compiled from his letters, was adopted by several new orders, including the Dominicans, the Augustinian canons, and the Knights of Mary, or Frati Gaudenti (*Inf.* 23.103 and note). The new rules Francis wrote were ratified by the papacy (11.94–99 and notes), though his will was later rejected. See Additional Note 5.

37–39. Behold now . . . fill this garden: Note the emphasis on sight (also evident at lines 19 and 27): both God's foresight [*proveder*] and the two "gazes" [*aspetto*] or "aspects" of the faith. See note to lines 7–39.

39. will equally fill this garden: See note to lines 133–38.

40–84. And know that . . . detained below: Halfway down, the rose is divided horizontally, below which are the souls of children, also divided according to their birth before or after Christ; their salvation depends not on their merit, but on the faith of their parents or of the Church, and on predestination, which endowed them at birth with differing degrees of intellectual acuity.

44–45. for all these are spirits . . . true power of choice: The children were spared damnation, the penalty of original sin (see *Purg.* 16.76–78 and note). Since the souls appear as if reunited with their bodies, it would be confusing to take "absolved" [*asciolti*] to mean released from the body, as some suggest.

46–48. You can perceive it well . . . listen to them: As in the case of Bernard, seen as an old man (31.59, 94), Dante's placement of children in the Empyrean departs from prevailing opinion, based on Eph. 4.13 and enunciated in Augustine's *De civ. Dei* (22.14–16), that all the resurrected, regardless of age at death, would in Heaven have bodies suited to perfect age, that is, about thirty-three years old, Christ's age at his death (see also *ST* 3a Suppl. q. 81 a. 1). Dante's Heaven is thus less uniform in human shapes and sizes than those of Augustine and Aquinas. The childish faces and voices are perceptible because of the provision at 30.44–45.

49–84. Now you have a doubt . . . detained below: Bernard answers the pilgrim's unspoken question: if children who die before the age of choice do not acquire personal merit, how are they given different ranks within the rose? (lines 49–51). Each enjoys a different endowment of grace at birth (61–75); their salvation is also subject to different criteria (76–84), based on distinct ages of salvation history.

52–66. Within this ample kingdom . . . let the effect suffice: Since all things the pilgrim sees in Heaven are determined by eternal law, nothing is left to chance, including the placement of every soul in the rose. See also note to lines 64–66.

52–54. Within this ample kingdom . . . thirst or hunger: Commentators note the reference to the redeemed at Apoc. 7.16–17 (see also 21.4): "They shall neither hunger nor thirst any more . . . God will wipe away every tear from their eyes"; Dante reverses the order of terms.

55–57. for eternal law . . . between ring and finger: The reward (the ring) is proportionate to the soul's merit (the finger). In the context of "the two gazes of the faith" (lines 37–39), the choice of the ring, which signifies faithfulness (the wedding band is *la fede* in modern Italian), may be associated with the faithful wives, widows, and patriarchs on both sides of the rose; the ranks are themselves rings or circles, *giri*. See *Purg*. 5.130–36 and note.

61–62. The King through whom this kingdom reposes: Further indication of Heaven as a monarchical realm, sharing many of the principles of Dante's idealized (but not unhistorical) earthly empire as described in *Monarchia*. See Additional Note 2.

64–75. creating all minds . . . in their first acumen: God grants to individuals different intellectual capacities and potentials to receive grace (cf. *Purg*. 16.85–90 and note); thus the placement of infants in the rose reflects not their acts while alive, but their congenital endowment with the ability to see and understand God. How Providence overrules heredity in distributing natural gifts was explained in *Par*. 8.97–136 (see note).

64–66. creating all minds . . . let the effect suffice. Infants receive distinct gifts of nature and grace at birth (see Nardi 1964), which is consistent with the first words of the cantica and with the philosophical ideas in *Ep*. 13.68–70 (see 1.4–5 and note) and *Conv*. 3.7.2–3. Discussing the moment when the soul is created and infused in the new creature,

> after the supreme deity, which is God, sees his creature prepared to receive of his benefits, he grants them as abundantly as he may, insofar as the creature is prepared to receive them (*Conv*. 4.21.11).

Bernard's discussion of the infants in the rose is thus relevant to the fundamental principles that organize *Paradiso*. See lines 73–75, 4.82–88 and notes.

67–72. And this is noted . . . wreaths of highest Light: Bernard's example of differing endowments are the twins Jacob and Esau, who "struggled" while still in Rebecca's womb (see 8.130–32 and notes, Gen. 25.22–27, Mal. 1.2–3, and especially Rom. 9.10–15) and whose differing destinies—Esau the reprobate who sold his birthright for a dish of lentils, Jacob the father of the twelve tribes of Israel—were manifest in the difference of hair color (see *ST* 1a 2a q. 112 a. 4).

Dante's rhyming of "hair" [*cappelli*] with "enwreathing" [*incappelli*, another coinage using *in-*] juxtaposes congenital hair color with the crown of bliss, earthly origins with ultimate reward. The struggling twins at the canto's midpoint also recall, at the other extreme of the universe in the like-numbered canto of Hell (*Inf*. 32.55–60), the rival brothers Napoleone and Alessandro, as well as the classical Eteocles and Polynices and the biblical Cain, slayer of Abel (see *Inf*. 26.52–54 and notes).

75. differing only in their first acumen: Intellectual sight, then, leads the approach to God as truth; hence the look or gaze of faith through which the two groups contemplated Christ (lines 19, 38). The happy gaze of the Creator (line 64; see *Purg*. 16.89; 25.70–72 and note) is reflected in the congenital ability of the creature to see and understand God, as suggested in the use of *acume*, whose derivation from Lat. *acus* [needle] alludes to the sharpness of the eye beam (from the extramissive model of sight). See note to 4.82–88.

76–84. In the earliest centuries . . . detained below: During the first ages, between Adam and Abraham, parental faith alone secured children salvation (Rom. 4.2–5, Gal. 3.5–9, *ST* 3a q. 70. a. 4); after the covenant with Abraham, the faith and virtue of the Jews was confirmed by circumcision (Gen. 17.1–14, Rom. 2–3; *ST* 3a q. 7[0]. a. 2); but after the coming of Christ, baptism into the Church is required for salvation (John 3.5, *ST* 3a q. 70. a. 2). Christian baptism in the Spirit is "perfect" in relation to circumcision, its imperfect foreshadowing (*ST* 3a q. 70 a. 1), and to the baptism of John the Baptist, which is of water only.

80–81. males were required . . . by circumcision: Pruning feathers in order to impede captive birds from flying away was a common practice, but in this mixed metaphor, circumcision adds to the soul's virtue in its flight toward God (see 15.53–54 and notes). A similar pun on *penne* (feathers, plumage) is at *Inf*. 20.40–45 (see note); for this same rhyme scheme, cf. *Purg*. 24.55–60 and note to 58–59.

83–87. without perfect baptism . . . to see Christ: The fourth and last of the triple rhymes on Christ in the *Paradiso* (see 12.71–75, 14.103–8, 19.103–5 and notes), establishing a pattern of 3, 3, 3 (= 9) plus 3 (= 12), or 3 + 1, with probable allusion to the nine celestial spheres plus the Empyrean (see *VN* 29.2). Each of the first three appeared in one of the central spheres of the cantica (the sun, fourth of seven planets; Mars, fifth of nine spheres; and the sixth, Jupiter, the mediator of Saturn and Mars (22.145–46); this last instance seals the universe with the name of Christ; see note to 19.100–111, and Additional Notes 4 and 8.

Each use of the name here refers to the role of Christ in history and in the poem, and does so in terms of vision, that is, understanding: in line 83 it demarcates the two "aspects" [*aspetti*] or "sights" of the rose; line 85 has the pilgrim gaze on the human resemblance of Christ and his mother; line 87 points to Mary's mediation to Dante of the sight of Christ, the goal of the poem.

84. detained below: Standard terminology for relegation to Limbo or Hell; see *ST* 3a. q. 5, a. 7: "In inferno *detinentur*" [they are detained in Hell].

85–114. Look now at the face . . . with our flesh: In these ten terzinas the pilgrim's gaze is directed toward Mary and the reenactment of Gabriel's annunciation to her; see note to lines 94–114.

85–86. Look now at the face . . . to see Christ: Because of Mary's likeness to her son, gazing at her leads to the sight of God; this also justifies lines 133–35. Since Mary and Christ are the only two souls in Heaven to have their bodies (25.122–29, with note), Mary's resemblance to Christ is that of a complete human being.

94–114. And the love . . . with our flesh: Gabriel's veneration of Mary is her third triumph in *Paradiso* (see 23.88–111, 31.118–38 and notes), and is placed here because the Incarnation, which began with the salutation of Mary, is, with the Atonement, the central event of salvation history and defines the principal articulation of the rose—indeed, makes the rose possible at all.

94–99. And the love . . . brighter because of it: The entire rose answers Gabriel's salutation of Mary (see next note), probably with "blessed art thou among women"—like a psalm sung antiphonally, with Gabriel leading the chorus.

95. *Ave Maria, gratia plena* [Hail Mary, full of grace]: Mary's name is not in the biblical version of the Annunciation story; its use here reflects liturgical or private prayer (instituted by 1176; see 23.88–89 and note).

100–102. O holy father . . . your eternal lot: These words closely echo those of Virgil to Beatrice in *Inf.* 2.82–84.

106–8. Thus I appealed again . . . the morning star: Mary is again like the rising light before the sun (see 31.118–20 and note); within the radiance shed by Mary, Bernard glows like Venus, the "planet that comforts to love" (*Purg.*1.19), in the light of the sun. For meanings attributable to the morning and evening star, see *Conv.* 2.2.1–5.

109–11. And he to me . . . thus we wish it to be: Gabriel is described with the virtues of a knight suing for his lady's favor (see lines 103–5). The angel's chivalric virtue reflects Bernard's own service to the Virgin, often compared to that of a knight (Warner 1976; and see 11.55–75, 101–2 and notes).

109–14. And he to me . . . with our flesh: Gabriel gives Mary the palm of victory, because in giving birth to Christ she will bring about the victory over death. Cf. also 9.118–25 and note.

114. wished to burden himself with our flesh: That is, to assume human nature in the Incarnation; see 7.28–30, 119 and notes; and compare *Mon.* 2.11.5, which echoes Is. 53.4: "He hath borne our infirmities, he hath carried our sorrows."

115–38. But come along now . . . your brow to fall: The ocular tour of the rose resumes (see 31.46, 97) with a return to Mary, where it begins and ends. There are places for Adam, Peter, John the Evangelist, and Moses (arranged chiastically, OT/NT, NT/OT). As before, Bernard directs the pilgrim's gaze to the other side: opposite Peter is Anna, mother of Mary, and opposite Adam is Lucia, to whom Dante was especially devoted (see *Conv.* 3.5.11–18). The order of naming is again chiastically NT/OT, OT/NT, but in a reversed (thus also chiastic) pattern with regard to the previous list. Peter and John are "columns" of the Church (Gal. 2.9).

115–26. But come along now . . . this lovely flower: This canto contains more than fifty Latinisms, some eight of which are found in this passage (see next note).

116–20. and note the great patricians . . . two roots of this rose: The most illustrious of those in the rose are named after the patricians, the highest Roman social group, and the hegemonic political form achieved by Rome, that of empire. "O qui perpetua," line 23 prays for the mind's ascent to the "august

throne" [*augustam sedem*] of the Father; and Mary herself is *agusta* as the soul of Henry VII on earth is destined to be *agosta* (30.136). The rose thus also resembles the historical Roman Empire, pacified under Augustus. Dante uses *empireo* [Empyrean] only at *Inf.* 2.21; but *imperio* [empire] here, one of only four uses in the poem, is nearly an anagram of it. See Additional Note 2.

117. most just and merciful empire: See 19.13 and note.

118–26. Those two who sit . . . this lovely flower: Bernard now shifts between the two historical groups, pointing first to Adam, root of the group believing in Christ to come, on Mary's left, whose "taste of the forbidden fruit / brought death and all our woe," and, on Mary's right, to Peter, who as Christ's vicar held the keys of Heaven (Matt. 16.19; cf. *Purg.* 9.117–27 and note); the man who lost eternal life and the warden of Paradise are juxtaposed (cf. lines 4–6). As elsewhere (see 27.115–20 and note), the roots are above, the leaves below.

123. the human race tastes so much bitterness: The tasting of the bitter fruit that precipitated Adam's fall echoes the pilgrim's rumination on his harsh destiny (see 18.3 and note) and the "taste" of the herbs that transformed Glaucus (see 1.67–69 and note), as well as Bernard's visions (31.111 and note).

127–32. And he who saw . . . lived on manna: The chiastic ordering places John, who witnessed a persecution of the Church, "the lovely bride," and prophesied future travails in the Apocalypse (see *Purg.* 32.109–60 with note, and *Purgatorio* Additional Note 15), directly to the right of Peter, first in the apostolic succession (see *Inferno* Additional Note 7); on the other side of Peter is Moses, who led Israel in its desert wanderings, restive to his authority (see *Purg.* 18.133–35 and note), and backsliding into idolatry (cf. *Purg.* 11.13–15 and note). The pairing of Moses and Peter as leaders of the chosen people before and after the Incarnation is traditional (cf. Raphael's 1511 *Disputa* in the Vatican).

133–38. Opposite Peter see Anna sit . . . your brow to fall: Anna was wife of Joachim and mother of Mary, known through apocryphal accounts digested in the *Golden Legend* (Chapter 131) and in painted cycles of the life of the Virgin whose subjects were derived from the same sources (e.g., Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel, ca. 1307). Lucia was the virgin patroness of Syracuse, whose name was etymologized as *lucis via* (way of light). When alerted by Mary, Lucia moves Beatrice to the pilgrim's rescue (*Inf.* 2.97 and note); of the three ladies in the court of Heaven who aid the pilgrim at the beginning of the poem, she is the last mentioned.

Eighteen souls are named as present in the rose, ten women and eight men; if, as Picone suggests in *LDT*, Beatrice is subtracted (she is anomalously placed to the right of Rachel in a section reserved for males who lived after Christ) while Bernard is added (see note to lines 34–35), the gender tally is nine apiece, Dante's favorite number. Still, with the inclusion of Beatrice women named outnumber named men (by the measure of Betrice), and with the inclusion of Anna, Mary's mother (but cf. lines 38–39), Jews named outnumber named Christians (even without including the Baptist, Peter, John, and Mary as Jews) by the measure of Anna, Mary's mother (but cf. lines 38–39). **133. Opposite Peter see Anna sit:** In the *Golden Legend* Anna is aunt to Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, as well as the mother of Mary. She bore to two subsequent husbands two further daughters named Mary, who gave birth to six of the apostles. As kin to the chief forerunner and grandmother of the disciples of Christ, Anna complements the Jewish matriarchs opposite her; her name rhymes with the *manna* of the Exodus, while the other rhyme, another Hebrew word, *Hosanna* (O save) echoes that used to hail Christ as he entered Jerusalem; thus she fittingly sits near the divide between the two groups.

135. does not move her eyes, though singing hosanna: Anna's focus on her daughter, even while praising God, seems to acknowledge human affections (see 14.61–66, 23.121–27 and notes) and permit divided attention in the blessed. For another interpretation, see Kay 2003a.

135. hosanna: Last of the three Latin liturgical phrases in the canto: the first, from David's psalm (line 12), acknowledges sin (*Inf.* 1.65); Gabriel's salutation of Mary (line 95) opens the possibility of redemption (*Purg.* 10.34–36 and note); this last is a song of praise and victory. See notes to lines 109–14, and 8.29, 28.118 (and 28.94, *osannar*), and Additional Note 4; see also *Purg.* 11.11 and 29.51.

138. when you bent your brow to fall: Mention of the brow links the pilgrim's risk of ruin (*Inf.* 1.61) to the fall of Lucifer, who had "raised his brow" in pride to his maker (*Inf.* 34.35). For the pilgrim's *upward* look for divine help, as in Ps. 120.1, see *Inf.* 1.17–18 and *Par.* 25.38–39, 31.118–38 and notes.

Lines 122–23 (Adam's fall), 127–29 (John the Evangelist, the Crucifixion), 130–32 (the Exodus), and 137–38 (the pilgrim rescued by Lucia) recapitulate salvation history in relation to the pilgrim's journey; allusions to the Cross and to the Exodus as contiguous exemplify the fourfold principles of *Conv.*1.2.2–7 and *Ep.* 13.20–21 (see our introduction to *Purgatorio*, pp. 12–15).

139–51. But because the time . . . this holy prayer: After recalling the beginning of the journey, Bernard now draws attention to its final object, God,

"primal love" (cf. *Inf*. 3.5–6, *Par*. 26.37–39 and notes), and recalls the necessity of obtaining assistance from Mary for this final ascent (see line 87).

139–41. But because the time . . . the cloth he has: Commentators suggest the sleeping state signifies the pilgrim's visionary trance (cf. *Purg*. 29.142–44 and note); but the plain sense of line 139 is that the pilgrim has a dream-vision, now hastening to its end (see Introduction, pp. 15–16). The simile of the tailor recalls the poet's careful allotments in the whole poem (cf. *Purg*. 33.139–40, with note), possibly echoing the thirteent-century rhetorician Boncompagno da Signa, who advised letter writers to set out enough paper for the task, "just as a provident tailor the cloth from which he intended to make a shirt or a skirt" (Alessio 1989, quoted in Hollander 2006).

145–47. Truly, lest perhaps you fly . . . gain grace by praying: Self-reliance at this point would result in failure, like the mad flights of Icarus or Ulysses (see 27.82–84; *Inf*. 26.110–11, 125 and notes; and *Inferno* Additional Note 11); aid must be requested (see *Purg*. 11.13–15).

148. And he began this holy prayer: Note the echo of line 3.

CANTO 33

"Vergine madre, figlia del tuo Figlio,
umile e alta più che creatura,
termine fisso d'etterno consiglio:
tu se' colei che l'umana natura
nobilitasti sì che 'l suo Fattore
non disdegnò di farsi sua fattura.
Nel ventre tuo si raccese l'Amore
per lo cui caldo ne l'etterna pace
così è germinato questo fiore.
Qui se' a noi meridïana face
di caritate, e giuso intra 'mortali
se' di speranza fontana vivace.
Donna, se' tanto grande e tanto vali
che qual vuol grazia e a te non ricorre
sua disïanza vuol volar sanz' ali.
La tua benignità non pur soccorre
a chi domanda, ma molte fïate
liberamente al dimandar precorre.
In te misericordia, in te pietate,
in te magnificenza, in te s'aduna
quantunque in creatura è di bontate.
Or questi, che da l'infima lacuna
de l'universo infin qui ha vedute
le vite spiritali ad una ad una,
supplica a te, per grazia, di virtute
tanto che possa con li occhi levarsi
più alto verso l'ultima salute.
E io, che mai per mio veder non arsi
più ch' i' fo per lo suo, tutti miei prieghi
ti porgo—e priego che non sieno scarsi—

CANTO 33

The Empyrean, continued: saint Bernard's prayer to the Virgin—invocation—the pilgrim's vision of God

"Virgin mother, daughter of your Son, humble
and exalted more than any other creature, fixed
term of eternal counsel:
you are she who ennobled human nature so
much that its Maker did not disdain to make
himself his own creature.
Within your womb that Love kindled itself
again whose warmth, in the eternal peace, has
caused the germinating of this flower.
Here to us you are a noonbright torch of love,
and down below among mortals you are a lively
fountain of hope.
Lady, you are so great and so powerful that if
anyone wishes grace and does not turn to you,
his desire seeks to fly without wings.
Your good will succors not only those who
ask, but many times freely runs before
the asking.
In you mercy, in you compassion, in you
magnificence, in you is united whatever there is
of goodness in any creature.
Now this man, who from the lowest pit of the
universe up to here has seen the lives of the
spirits one by one,
supplicates you, of grace, for so much power
that he may lift his eyes up higher toward the
ultimate salvation.
And I, who for my own vision never burned
more than I do for his, extend to you all my
prayers—and I beg they not fall short—

perché tu ogne nube li disleghi
di sua mortalità co' prieghi tuoi,
sì che 'l sommo piacer li si dispieghi.
Ancor ti priego, regina, che puoi
ciò che tu vuoli, che conservi sani,
dopo tanto veder, li affetti suoi.
Vinca tua guardia i movimenti umani:
vedi Beatrice con quanti beati
per li miei prieghi ti chiudon le mani!"
Li occhi da Dio diletti e venerati,
fissi ne l'orator, ne dimostraro
quanto i devoti prieghi li son grati;
indi a l'etterno lume s'addrizzaro,
nel qual non si dee creder che s'invii
per creatura l'occhio tanto chiaro.
E io ch'al fine di tutt' i disii
appropinquava, sì com' io dovea
l'ardor del desiderio in me finii.
Bernardo m'accennava e sorridea
perch' io guardassi suso, ma io era
già per me stesso tal qual ei volea,
ché la mia vista, venendo sincera,
e più e più intrava per lo raggio
de l'alta luce che da sé è vera.
Da quinci innanzi il mio veder fu maggio
che 'l parlar mostra, ch'a tal vista cede,
e cede la memoria a tanto oltraggio.
Qual è colüi che sognando vede,
che dopo 'l sogno la passione impressa
rimane, e l'altro a la mente non riede:
cotal son io, ché quasi tutta cessa
mia visïone, e ancor mi distilla
nel core il dolce che nacque da essa.
Così la neve al sol si disigilla;
così al vento ne le foglie levi
si perdea la sentenza di Sibilla.
O somma luce che tanto ti levi
da' concetti mortali, a la mia mente
ripresta un poco di quel che parevi,

that you dissolve every cloud of his mortality
with your prayers, so that the highest Delight may
be unfolded to him.
Again I beg you, O queen, for you have the
power to do what you will, that you will preserve
the health of his affects, after so great a vision.
May your protection overcome his human
impulses: see how Beatrice and so many blessed souls
join in my prayers and fold their hands before you!"
Those eyes beloved and venerated by God,
fixed on the supplicant, showed us how much
they are pleased by devout prayers;
then they turned directly to the Light, into
which, we must believe, no other creature's eye
penetrates so clearly.
And I, as I approached the goal of all desires,
perfected within me, as I should, the ardor of my
desire.
Bernard was beckoning to me and smiling, to
make me gaze upward, but on my own I was
already such as he wished,
for my sight, becoming purer, entered deeper
and deeper into the ray of the supreme Light that
is true in itself.
From here onward my seeing was greater than
speech can show, which gives way before such a
sight, and memory gives way before such excess.
As is one who sees in dream, and after the
dream the passion impressed remains, but the
rest does not return to the mind:
so am I, for almost all my vision has ceased,
but still there trickles into my heart the sweetness
born of it.
Thus the snow comes unsealed in the sun,
thus in the wind, on the fluttering leaves, the
Sibyl's meaning was lost.
O highest Light that rise so far beyond our
mortal thought, lend again to my memory a little
of how you appeared,

e fa la lingua mia tanto possente
ch' una favilla sol de la tua gloria
possa lasciare a la futura gente,
ché, per tornare alquanto a mia memoria
e per sonare un poco in questi versi,
più si conceperà di tua vittoria.
Io credo, per l'acume ch'io soffersi
del vivo raggio, ch' i' sarei smarrito,
se li occhi miei da lui fossero aversi.
E' mi ricorda ch' io fui più ardito
per questo a sostener, tanto ch' i' giunsi
l'aspetto mio col valore infinito.
Oh abbondante grazia ond' io presunsi
ficcar lo viso per la luce etterna,
tanto che la veduta vi consunsi!
Nel suo profondo vidi che s'interna,
legato con amore in un volume,
ciò che per l'universo si squaderna:
sustanze e accidenti e lor costume
quasi conflati insieme, per tal modo
che ciò ch' i' dico è un semplice lume.
La forma universal di questo nodo
credo ch' i' vidi, perché più di largo,
dicendo questo, mi sento ch' i' godo.
Un punto solo m'è maggior letargo
che venticinque secoli a la 'mpresa
che fé Nettuno ammirar l'ombra d'Argo.
Così la mente mia, tutta sospesa,
mirava fissa, immobile e attenta,
e sempre di mirar faceasi accesa.
A quella luce cotal si diventa
che volgersi da lei per altro aspetto
è impossibil che mai si consenta,
però che 'l ben, ch' è del volere obietto,
tutto s'accoglie in lei, e fuor di quella
è defettivo ciò ch' è lì perfetto.
Omai sarà più corta mia favella,
pur a quel ch' io ricordo, che d'un fante
che bagni ancor la lingua a la mammella.

and make my tongue so powerful that it may leave a single spark of your glory to the people yet to be,

for, if it comes back somewhat to my memory and resounds a little in these verses, more will be conceived of your victory.

I believe, because of the sharpness of the living ray that I sustained, that I would have been lost if my eyes had turned away from it.

I remember that therefore I became bolder to endure it, so much that I joined my gaze with the infinite Worth.

Oh overflowing grace whence I presumed to probe with my eyes the eternal Light, so deeply that I fulfilled all my seeing there!

In its depths I saw internalized, bound with love in one volume, what through the universe becomes unsewn quires:

substances and accidents and their modes as it were conflated together, in such a way that what I describe is a simple light.

The universal form of this knot I believe I saw, because I feel my joy expand as I say this.

One point alone is greater forgetfulness to me than twenty-five centuries to the enterprise that made Neptune marvel at the shadow of the Argo.

Thus my mind, entirely lifted up, gazed fixedly, immobile and intent, and became ever more aflame to gaze.

In that Light one becomes such that it is impossible ever to consent to turn away from it toward any other sight,

because goodness, the object of the will, is all gathered there, and what is perfect there falls short elsewhere.

Henceforth my speech will be briefer, even about what I remember, than that of a child that still bathes his tongue at the breast.

Non perché più ch' un semplice sembiante
fosse nel vivo lume ch' io mirava,
che tal è sempre qual s'era davante,
ma per la vista che s'avvalorava
in me guardando, una sola parvenza,
mutandom' io, a me si travagliava.
Ne la profonda e chiara sussistenza
de l'alto lume parvermi tre giri,
di tre colori e d'una contenenza,
e l'un da l'altro come iri da iri
parea reflesso, e 'l terzo parea foco
che quinci e quindi igualmente si spiri.
Oh quanto corto è il dire, e come fioco
al mio concetto! e questo, a quel ch' i' vidi,
è tanto, che non basta a dicer "poco."
O luce etterna che solo in te sidi,
sola t'intendi, e da te intelletta,
e intendente te ami e arridi!
Quella circulazion che sì concetta
pareva in te come lume reflesso,
da li occhi miei alquanto circunspetta,
dentro da sé, dal suo colore stesso
mi parve pinta de la nostra effige:
per che 'l mio viso in lei tutto era messo.
Qual è 'l geomètra che tutto s'affige
per misurar lo cerchio, e non ritrova,
pensando, quel principio ond' elli indige:
tal era io a quella vista nova;
veder voleva come si convenne
l'imago al cerchio e come vi s'indova.
Ma non eran da ciò le proprie penne,
se non che la mia mente fu percossa
da un fulgore in che sua voglia venne.
A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa,
ma già volgeva il mio disio e 'l *velle*,
sì come rota ch' igualmente è mossa,
l'Amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.

Not because there was more than one simple
aspect in the living Light into which I gazed, for it
is always what it was before,
but because my sight was growing stronger
in me as I gazed, one sole appearance, as I
changed, was transformed for me.
In the profound and clear Subsistence of the
deep Light I saw three circles, of three colors and
of one circumference,
and one seemed reflected from the other like a
rainbow from a rainbow, and the third seemed
fire breathing equally from both.
Oh how short is speech and how hoarse to my
thought! and this, next to what I saw, is such that
to say "little" is not enough.
O eternal Light, who throne only within yourself,
solely know yourself, and, known by yourself
and knowing, love and smile:
that circulation which seemed in you to be
generated like reflected light, surveyed by my
eyes somewhat,
within itself, in its very own color, seemed to
me to be painted with our effigy, by which my
sight was all absorbed.
Like the geometer who is all intent to square
the circle and cannot find, for all his thought, the
principle he needs:
such was I at that miraculous sight; I wished to
see how the image fitted the circle and how it
enwheres itself there.
But my own feathers were not sufficient for
that, except that my mind was struck by a flash in
which its desire came.
Here my high imagining failed of power; but
already my desire and the *velle* were turned, like
a wheel being moved evenly,
by the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.

NOTES

1–145. Virgin mother, daughter . . . and the other stars: The canto falls naturally into two parts, the second nearly twice as long as the first: (1) preliminaries to the vision (lines 1–50), and (2) the vision itself (lines 51–145).

1–50. Virgin mother, daughter . . . me gaze upward: The chief preliminary is saint Bernard's elaborate, ceremonial "holy prayer" (32.151) to the Virgin (lines 1–39); it is followed by her expression of acceptance (lines 40–45), the pilgrim's readying of himself (lines 46–48), and the saint's invitation (lines 49–50). One notes the intricate deployment of the traditional Catholic structure of hierarchical sponsorship or patronage (like the entire tradition of veneration of saints, as a social structure it goes back to the importance in ancient Roman society, under both Republic and Empire, of the dependence on the influence of powerful men, called *patrones* [patrons, or great fathers; the word is an augmentative of *pater* (father)], of lesser individuals, their *clientes* [clients]): Bernard, as the pilgrim's sponsor, prays to his own sponsor—the Virgin, the supersponsor. A chief function of the preliminaries is, of course, to intensify the reader's anticipation of the remarkable climax and culmination of the poem, which reaches a pitch of intensity unique in all literature, far transcending that of the preliminaries themselves.

1–39. Virgin mother, daughter . . . hands before you: Saint Bernard's prayer is a compendium of themes and language from the long tradition of praise and supplication of the Virgin (see Warner 1976, Barnay 1999, both fundamental; typical examples are Raby 1959 nos. 69, 71, 163; see Additional Note 4, as well as *Purgatorio* Additional Note 5). The prayer falls into three parts: (1) lines 1–9: invocation of the Virgin, her nature and place in salvation history; (2) lines 10–21: the Virgin's present power and good will as intercessor; and (3) lines 22–39: the specific pleas on behalf of the pilgrim. This structure goes back ultimately to that of ancient pagan hymns, analyzed in Norden 1912 and Klingner 1921 (the latter in relation to Boethius' "O qui perpetua": see pp. 686–87): invocation [*epikléises*]; acts/power [*aretología*]; petitions [*euchaí*]. Bosco/Reggio sees a parallel between the two overall parts (lines 1–21 and lines 22–39) and the two parts of the Ave Maria: praise followed by the request for prayer "now and at the hour of our death"; this ignores the sharp break at line 10.

1–9. Virgin mother, daughter . . . of this flower: Three terzine on the nature of the Virgin and her place in salvation history.

1–6. Virgin mother, daughter . . . his own creature: As the commentators point out, the first six lines feature four traditional paradoxes: she was both virgin and mother, both daughter (because she is his creation) and mother of Christ, both humblest and most exalted of creatures, and through her God became a human being, one of his own creatures.

1–3. Virgin mother . . . eternal counsel: The first terzina, composed entirely of substantive constructions, is formally the most clearly invocative of the first three, leading to the statements beginning with "tu se'" [you are]. Compare the transition in Boethius' "O qui perpetua" from "O qui" [O you who] in lines 1–6, formulas of invocation, to the independent clauses starting with "tu" [you] plus finite verbs, independent clauses that begin in line 6.

1. Virgin mother: In the Italian, both of these words are strongly nouns, and the expression has a characteristic terseness that is untranslatable.

3. fixed term of eternal counsel: That is, the Virgin was chosen by God's wisdom from eternity, as a "fixed term," i.e., an essential *terminus* [end point] in the plan of salvation, to which a long history and genealogy would lead (cf. Matthew 1). Cf. also Prov. 8.23 (the speaker is Wisdom): "Ab aeterno ordinata sum, et ex antiquis antequam terra fieret" [I have been ordained from eternity, and of old, before the earth was made].

4–9. you are she . . . blossoming of this flower: These lines recapitulate salvation history. There is a sharp break after line 9, with a turning to the present (prepared in line 9: "this flower") and the Virgin's present power and activity as intercessor.

4–5. you are she . . . nature so much: In the Middle Ages, the Virgin was virtually universally believed to be entirely free of sin, either sanctified in the womb, after being naturally conceived, as saint Bernard and after him the Dominicans held, or miraculously conceived without sin by her parents (the so-called Immaculate Conception, argued for by the Franciscans and widely believed, but made an official dogma only in 1854). In *Conv*. 4.5.5 Dante seems to regard her superiority to all other humans as providentially ordained and prepared naturally, since "the dwelling prepared for the king of Heaven must be entirely clean and pure," but he avoids the technical question of her sinlessness. In any case, the Virgin is a "fixed term" in the logical sense as well as others.

7–9. Within your womb . . . germinating of this flower: "That Love" refers of course to God's love for human beings, which reached its fullest expression in the

Incarnation ("kindling" or quickening in the embryonic Jesus) and the Atonement (cf. John 3.16), reestablishing peace between God and human beings (cf. *Purg.* 10.34–36) and led to the raising of the blessed to the heavenly rose here in the Empyrean. Dante's term "germinating" includes the entire basis of the formation of the heavenly rose, but note the imagery of sunlight causing the blossoming of flowers, as in 23.70–96 and 30. 61–81; the motif of the rose is particularly associated with the Virgin as well as with Christ (see our notes to 31.1–27).

10–21. Here to us . . . goodness in any creature: The present significance of the Virgin, first in Heaven (lines 10–11), then on earth (lines 11–21): after Christ she is the most important intercessor. These lines clearly reflect the traditional *aretalogía* (recitation of the deeds of the deity).

10–12. Here to us . . . fountain of hope: The two metaphors, "torch of love" and "fountain of hope," repeat the motifs of the sunlight and the river of light (cf. the note to lines 7–9). "Noon-bright" (*meridiana* [literally, noontide]) is the status of full beatitude in Heaven, as midnight is that of the ultimate wretchedness of Hell (cf. *Inf.* 10.100–108, with notes).

13–18. Lady, you are so great . . . before the asking: The pilgrim is an example: the Virgin initiates the chain of intervention (Virgin, Lucia, Beatrice, Virgil: *Inf.* 2.94–112), which precedes the pilgrim's cry for help (*Inf.* 1.65; cf. our note to lines 22–24). The tradition includes many instances of her maternal solicitude and "prevenient" help; perhaps the most popular legend (there are more than two hundred versions) was that of the doorkeeper, sometimes the treasurer, of a convent (in one version her name is Beatrice; cf. Guiette 1953) who, seduced and abandoned, spent years as a prostitute; when she repented and returned trembling to the convent, she found that the Virgin had replaced her so that no one had noticed her absence.

19–21. In you mercy . . . in any creature: Return to the praise of the Virgin's qualities. One should recall the Virgin's being the first and most important example of each corrective virtue on the terraces of the mountain of Purgatory (cf. *Purgatorio* Additional Note 12).

22–39. Now this man . . . hands before you: Almost half of the prayer sets forth the petitions led up to by the first two sections (see the note to lines 1–39): (1) the power to sustain direct gaze into God (lines 22–33); and (2) preservation of his state of grace after the cessation of his vision (lines 34–36). Lines 37–39 are a conclusion associating the prayers of the rest of the blessed with those of the saint (note *prieghi* [prayers] in line 39).

22–33. Now this man . . . unfolded to him: The first petition has two parts: lines 22–27, an initial statement of the pilgrim's petition for the vision, and lines 28–33, an amplification adding the saint's own fervent request for this favor.

22–27. Now this man . . . the ultimate salvation: The saint begins by stating the pilgrim's request for him: power (the primacy of intellect is implied but not stated) to dare to look at God.

22–24. Now this man . . . one by one: Note the brief recapitulation of the entire poem (not the first or last in this canto, which is particularly rich in them); God is the ultimate goal, as well as the final completion of the poem (cf. Additional Note 14).

28–33. And I, who . . . unfolded to him: The saint's charity (cf. 31.61–63, 109–11) extends to his fervent support of the pilgrim's desire for the vision; "all my prayers" indicates "all my capacity of devout supplication," as opposed to "prayers" in the sense of "specific petitions," as in line 39.

31–33. that you dissolve . . . unfolded to him: This is an amplification of the initial statement of the pilgrim's desire (lines 22–27); it specifies both removal of the obstacle to vision, the "cloud[s] of his mortality" (his bodily limitations; note the parallel with "O qui perpetua," lines 25–26), and the goal of participation in God as absolute joy (for the human capacity for pleasure as integral to the resemblance to God, see *Purg.* 16.85–90, with notes). Saint Bernard's descriptions of his own mystical raptures (in his *De diligendo Deo*) treat them as exclusively affective, not intellectual.

34–37. Again, I beg . . . his human impulses: These lines provide an important indication that (contrary to what some commentators suppose) Dante's conception is not that the pilgrim would automatically remain in a state of grace after the ending of the vision. That the request is made indicates that without the help of continuing grace the pilgrim could fall again. This is a separate question from that of his predestination to salvation, but both questions gain additional poignancy from the literal facts of the poet's situation, whether the poem is viewed as a dream or as entirely a fiction.

38–39. see how Beatrice . . . hands before you: The brief conclusion of the saint's prayer, associating others with his requests. The text mentions only Beatrice and "so many" of the blessed as joining their prayers to his, but we are surely to imagine a very large number, if not all of them. The joining of the hands in prayer is traditionally a sign of withdrawal inward from the outer

world; it is a curious touch when imagined of the souls of the blessed (is there an unstated connotation of the joined hands as vectors pointing, directing the prayers toward the Virgin?). Chiavacci Leonardi usefully reminds us that the pilgrim is seeing the blessed *as if* they had bodies (as Beatrice observes in 31.44–45): they are only appearances to his imagination.

40–51. Those eyes beloved . . . such as he wished: Further preliminaries: the Virgin's indication of her acceptance of saint Bernard's prayer and her turning to God to further it (lines 40–45), the pilgrim's preparing himself (lines 46–48), and the saint's invitation (lines 49–51).

40–45. Those eyes beloved . . . penetrates so clearly: The Virgin's gaze—we are to understand that it is loving and joyful—indicates clearly that she accepts the saint's prayers, and she turns into the light, obviously in order to add her prayers to his. That the Virgin's vision penetrates more deeply into God than any other creature's is probably to be understood as the result of the intensity of her love (otherwise there may be some discrepancy with Aquinas's discussion of Adam and Christ as the highest human intellects in 13.37–49, where there is no mention either of Eve or of the Virgin); thus she may be an exceptional instance of the primacy of love.

46–47. the goal of all desires: The idiomatic syntax of the Italian "tutt' i disiri" allows both "all desires" (i.e., all human and angelic desires) and "all my desires," which coexist in the phrase in quite untranslatable fashion: he is both individual and Everyman.

46–51. And I, as I . . . wished: The transition to the pilgrim's inward experience is complex: in lines 46–48 the emphasis is on his participating fully in the intensity of the saint's prayer, mustering and focusing his own desire; but lines 50–51 show him already, even before the saint's gestures of lines 49–50, he says, transcending all tutelage, he is on his own and thus, without any marked syntactical division, in line 52 the utterly unprecedented account of the vision begins.

52–145. for my sight . . . and the other stars: The matchlessly eloquent climax of the poem is remarkable in many ways. As an effort to imagine the experience of the beatific vision of God as it might be granted to a still living human being, it departs sharply from the entire tradition of reports by practicing Christian mystics: although the cognitive aspect of the pilgrim's vision transcends, as the poet says, the capabilities of his memory as well as of human language (themes asserted at each level: lines 55–66, 94–96,

106–8, 121–23), he insists on the primacy of intellect in the experience, and the gradation of its evolution is anchored on four stages of substantive intellectual insight: (1) the intuition of the "universal knot" joining substance and accident (lines 85–93); (2) the triune nature of God and the internal relation of the three Persons of the Trinity (lines 109–20); (3) the presence of Christ; and (4) the union of Christ's divine and human natures (lines 127–41). It hardly needs to be said that these themes derive from Dante's reading; they are transfigured by his imaginative power and his ability to muster his extraordinary powers of expression (for the implicit assertion of authority here, see Ascoli 2008).

The passage is remarkable also in gathering together themes, motifs, and images from the preceding parts of the poem, bringing them to bear on the climax in a way that has no parallel, as a structural fulfillment, in any other literary text (the closest parallel might be the extraordinary recapitulations and codas of the late works of Beethoven). One should note how thorough the repeated recall of the themes and language of the opening of the cantica is, especially of 1.1–12.

One major governing sequence in the three cantiche of the poem is that the endings of *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* include major anticipations of the final vision. In the *Inferno* the anticipation is dark indeed, as the figure of Satan is parodic both of the triune nature of God and of the Crucifixion (see Freccero 1964 and *Inferno* Additional Note 16). In the *Purgatorio* Christ is present in the Gryphon but in the mode of opacity: the union of the two natures is represented in the hybrid of eagle and lion; reflection can see each separately but not the principle of their union (see especially our notes to *Purg.* 31.121–31); in the final vision, the theme and mode of transparency replace the earlier darkness and opacity.

52–66. for my sight . . . meaning was lost: A preliminary stage of the vision in which the pilgrim experiences the deeper and deeper penetration of his gaze into the infinitely transparent light, but not yet reaching its goal (this will begin in lines 79–81). As in 30.97–108 (the initial description of the transmission to the universe of God's creative power through the ray of his light), Dante is drawing on the traditional theory of the three lights (those of nature, revelation, and glory), God's glory (1.1–12) being also the medium of the beatific vision (Singleton 1957).

52–54. for my sight . . . true in itself: Each of the stages discussed in the introductory note on the passage is reached via the gradual strengthening of visual acuity (the faculty of sight in question is of course not the eye of the body but

of the mind; note the important parallel with "O qui perpetua," lines 23–24). For the bodily eye as emitting light that penetrates external space, see *Inf.* 9.7–73, with note. This theme of the strengthening of the pilgrim's sight began in the *Purgatorio* (see *Purg.* 15.7–13, with notes) and has continued steadily through the *Paradiso* (major moments of the process include 1.49–57, 4.139–5.12, and especially 30.46–50). The divine light is "true in itself" because God is himself the Truth—"the good of the intellect" (*Inf.* 3.18), the loss of which is the most fundamental anguish of Hell (*Inf.* 4.42: even the virtuous in Limbo "without hope . . . live in desire").

55–66. From here onward . . . meaning was lost: This is the first in the series of expressions of the dual impossibility of expression: the experience transcends both language and memory (but what escapes memory is intellectual in nature; see next note).

58–63. As is one who sees . . . sweetness born of it: See also the note to line 64. Dante's emphasis on the relative permanence of the affective aspect of the pilgrim's vision ("the passion impressed," line 59) does echo the testimony of such mystics as saint Bernard, although not his insistence on its primarily intellectual nature (of which the affective dimension is the result), in "seeing" (line 55), "sight" (line 56), "the rest" [*l'altro*], and "mind" (line 60), and "vision" (line 62), and later, which is the reason for the repeated emphasis on the loss of the memory. For the importance of what may seem the mere analogy of dream here, see our Introduction, pp. 17–19.

64–66. Thus the snow . . . meaning was lost: Two analogies that resound with other parts of the poem. Although they express the impermanence of the pilgrim's memory, the tone is that of rejoicing at having had the vision; in both cases earlier negative implications are replaced with positive ones (cf. our note on *Purg.* 30.20).

64. Thus the snow comes unsealed: Note how the image of the melting snow continues that of distillation in line 62. Compare the long simile in *Purg.* 30.85–99, where the compassionate singing of the angels brings the melting of the ice (of guilt and fear) surrounding the pilgrim's heart, compared to the trickling [*trapelare*] of melting snow, closely related to lines 62–63 here. In *Paradiso* 2 the analogy of snow losing its form in the rays of the sun (lines 104–11) is used of Beatrice's disproof of the pilgrim's errors about the moon spots, and the truth, she says, will "inform" his intellect (i.e., impose on it the permanent form of true doctrine).

65–66. thus in the wind . . . meaning was lost: Dante knew of this traditional idea from *Aen.* 3.443–51 (Helenus is advising Aeneas not to rely on the writings of the Cumaean Sibyl but to speak with her directly):

> insanam vatem aspicies, quae rupe sub ima
> fata canit foliisque notas et nomina mandat.
> quaecumque in foliis descripsit carmina virgo
> digerit in numerum atque antro seclusa reliquit:
> illa manent immota locis neque ab ordine cedunt.
> verum eadem, verso tenuis cum cardine ventus
> impulit et teneras turbavit ianua frondes,
> numquam deinde cavo volitantia prendere saxo
> nec revocare situs aut iungere carmina curat.
> [You will behold the mad prophetess, who in a cave in the cliff
> sings destinies and entrusts her words and names to leaves;
> whatever verses the virgin has written down on her leaves
> she arranges in order and stores hidden in her cave:
> they remain unmoving in their places and do not change their order.
> But when a light breeze touches them, as the door turns
> on its post, and disturbs the fragile leaves,
> never again does she take them up as they flutter about the cave,
> nor cares to call them back to their places or join the poems together.]

Vergil's fourth *Eclogue*, so important for Dante's view of him, begins with a reference to the Sibyl's prophecy of a new age (see text and translation in our *Purgatorio*, pp. 584–87, our note to *Purg.* 22.79–81, and Additional Note 14 there). Dante probably connected the Vergilian theme of the loss of the Sibyl's prophetic insights with the pathos of Virgil's loss of salvation (cf. *Inf.* 8.128–30 and 9.1–9, with notes).

67–75. O highest Light . . . of your victory: The last appeal for help in the poem (but not the last apostrophe of God), closely related to 1.19–24, where the memory of the vision is called its *ombra* [shadow]. Note that the invocation asks twice, in parallel constructions, for help with both memory (lines 68 and 73) and expression (lines 70 and 74). A puzzle is presented by line 75: what is the "victory" of God that is referred to? In our view the term should probably be taken to refer to God's utter transcendence, above all created things, but the tonality is strange, as if posterity (line 73) would have to depend exclusively on Dante's poem for knowledge of God. Perhaps the lines suggest that Dante hopes his poem will rival more conventional religious texts.

76–93. I believe, because . . . as I say this: The intensity of the poet's invocation leads naturally to intensification of the vision, and to its first substantive content, "substances and accidents and their modes." Some commentators express surprise that the poet's vision of God should involve increased understanding of the universe (see our notes on lines 85–93). Characteristically, although this stage of the vision is said to grasp the most fundamental structure of created things, all that remains of the insight is the feeling of expanded joy (lines 91–93). For the issue of Dante's authority, implicit here and throughout, see Ascoli 2008.

76–81. I believe, because . . . the infinite Worth: These lines introduce the motif of the sharp power of the light, such that he cannot turn away and would be lost if he did so (note the parallel with the discussion of the angels: 29.49–66); this idea strengthens his resolve to see more deeply, and at this point his gaze reaches God himself ("the infinite Worth," line 81).

82–84. O overflowing grace . . . fulfilled all my seeing there: This first substantive phase begins with the exclamation of overflowing gratitude at the gift of grace, as the second one will end with a parallel expression of awe and wonder (lines 124–26), which allows him to penetrate the divine light with his sight ("ficcar lo viso"): he is no passive recipient of divine favor; as Sapegno observes, the theme of his intense intellectual striving is a far cry from the mystics' sensations of abandon and annihilation in ecstasy; it is much closer to Boethius' conception in "O qui perpetua." *Consunsi* (line 84) has received differing interpretations; we understand it with Vellutello and many modern interpreters: his (intellectual) seeing reached the utmost fulfillment of its potentiality—he saw all that he was capable of seeing; the remark is to be taken as commenting on line 81, that is, on the complete vision from here to line 142.

85–93. In its depths . . . as I say this: The first substantive intellectual perception is that of the metaphysical structure of creation: "substances and accidents and their modes." This is the culmination of the basic approach of the entire *Comedy* previous to the Empyrean—the knowledge of God as he is revealed in his works, i.e., in creation: the contemplation of the universe is the first stage in the knowledge of God (cf. our note on *Purg.* 28.80). Fundamental texts for the entire poem are Rom. 1.20 ("For the invisible things of [God], from the creation, of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: his eternal power also, and divinity") and, especially relevant to the *Paradiso*, Ps. 18.2–3 ("The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands. Day to day uttereth

speech, and night to night sheweth knowledge"). The recapitulation of this theme in the "simple light" of God, in which the pilgrim intuits "the universal form" of the metaphysical knot constituting the unity of each created thing, amounts to a vision of the Logos, the Christian version of the Neoplatonic principle of *noûs* [absolute Mind], which contains all the forms or ideas of existing things by knowing them, and thus brings them into existence: "In the beginning was the Word . . . All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1.1 and 3–4). Thus, as we might perhaps expect, in the pilgrim's vision, Christ is both "Alpha . . . the Beginning and," as we shall see, "O . . . the End" (Apoc. 21.6); again, see Additional Note 14. Still, although the principle intuited in the vision is identified, the intuition itself, of course, utterly transcends human memory and speech; indeed, the principle basis for the claim is the expanding joy he feels as he states it (lines 92–93).

85–87. In its depths . . . unsewn quires: The statement of this stage of the vision is introduced by a famous passage using the metaphor of the book (a useful survey of the book metaphors in the *Comedy* is the classic discussion in Curtius 1953). The effectiveness of the metaphor hinges on the ambiguity of the key term "volume," often used by Dante to connect the idea of the universe as a book with the turnings of the heavens (an etymological play, since Lat. *volumen* [a thing turned] originally referred to scrolls; with the advent of the codex, of course, it is no longer the rotation of a spindle but the turning of pages that constitutes the manipulation of a book). Codices are made up of quires [quaternions, It. *quaderni*: paper or parchment folded three times to form eight leaves or sixteen pages], gatherings that are sewn together at the spine. Hence Dante's daring metaphor: in the Logos he sees, "bound together with love in one volume" (a daringly appropriate metaphor for the enclosing sphere of the godhead, combining both spherical enclosure and the Logos or Word as like a book), what (literally) "through the universe becomes freed from its gathering": *si* [di]*squaderna*, like the loose leaves of the Sibyl. For the "knot," see the next note. The love that binds the "volume" is the love that prompted the creation (cf. 29.13–18, with notes).

91. The universal form of this knot: The knot or node [It. *nodo*] is the principle that unifies form with matter, thus "substances and accidents and their modes." As Dante knew (cf. Shapiro 1998), it was frequently used to refer to the union of soul and body (also a joining of form and matter—cf. Donne's "The Extasie," line 64: "The subtle knot that makes us man"; and cf. *Purgatorio* Additional Note 11).

94–96. One point alone . . . shadow of the Argo: The literal sense of these lines is that the pilgrim's vision of God's omniscience and omnipotence contained (and his memory lost) more than the entire experience of humanity since the voyage of Argo. Probably the "one point" is the one just identified, the "universal knot" whose tying brings substances—i.e., the whole creation—into being; there is also the possibility that the reference is to any of the instants of the vision that is unfolding. The multivalent terms "knot" and "point" are brought into close proximity (see the note to 28.14).

The image of Neptune and Argo was suggested by Statius's *Achilleid* 1.25–76, in which Achilles' mother, the sea-nymph Thetis, sees from the bottom of the sea the ship carrying Paris and Helen to Troy; she foresees the Trojan War and the death of her son, and pleads with Neptune to sink the ship (Curtius 1950). Tragic pagan motifs are again transfigured into Christian triumph (see *Purg.* 30.20, with note).

The matchless suggestiveness of these lines serves to bring full circle the references to the voyage of Argo in 2.1–18 (see our notes): there the point of view is that of the Argonauts themselves, in the ship Argo or watching Jason plow with the fire-breathing bulls; here Argo is far above Neptune, who wonders at it from the bottom of the sea: so high above are the pilgrim and his poet. The term *letargo* [forgetfulness] is formed from the Greek word *lethe* [forgetfulness], as well as rhyming with, containing, and thus preparing, *Argo*: it is striking that when the pilgrim faints into Lethe (*Purg.* 31.88–90), it is excess of penitent self-knowledge that overcomes him, as here it is the excess of the vision of God, when, at the very end, his imagination is overcome. "Un punto solo" [one point alone] is a conspicuous echo of *Inf.* 5.132 (see the note to 29.9).

97–99. Thus my mind . . . aflame to gaze: A summing up of this first substantive phase, predominantly in the past tense.

100–105. In that light . . . falls short elsewhere: These lines, in the present tense, beginning after a full stop, and turning from the state of the pilgrim's attention to the nature of the light itself, smoothly begin the transition to the second phase. Note the relation with "O qui perpetua," line 22, on the "fount of Good" as the object of intellectual vision—the characteristic Neoplatonic fusion of goodness and truth. Other goods than God, although they are good by reflecting or participating in his goodness, are not the absolute (cf. *Purg.* 17.127–35; *Par.* 13.52–54, 26.28–36).

106–23. Henceforth my speech . . . is not enough: The second phase of the vision, preceded by the inexpressibility topos (lines 106–8) and commenting

on the growth of acuity (lines 109–14), followed by another version of the inexpressibility topos.

106–8. Henceforth my speech . . . tongue at the breast: After the past tense (lines 97–105) and the present tense (lines 100–105), the future tense in these lines has considerable force in suggesting the continuing dynamism of the vision. The term *fante* (from the present participle of Lat. *for, fari* [to speak]) refers to a child that has begun to speak (an *infante* is one who has not yet begun to speak); one may recall the reference to childish speech in *Inf.* 32.7–9: the bottom of Hell cannot be described by a child that says "Mama" or "Daddy," and an adult who has had the ultimate vision of God has even less power of speech than a very small child beginning to speak but still at the breast.

109–14. Not because there . . . transformed for me: The vision changes as the pilgrim's power of sight increases—the "transformation" of what is seen results from the further penetration; this principle is made explicit here because the vision of the Logos in lines 85–93 expresses the relation of God to his creation, a relatively external aspect, so to speak. Lines 109–14 prepare for the continuing changes, into both the second and third stages of objective vision (lines 127–41).

115–20. In the profound . . . equally from both: The three circles are an "appearance" (line 113) of the three Persons of the Trinity: perfect ("circles"), equal ("of one circumference"), but distinct ("of different colors"); the Son is identified first, for his is the circle "that seemed reflected from the other"; "the other" is the Father, and the third is the Holy Spirit, "breathing equally from both." The symbolic representation of the Trinity as interlocking colored circles was traditional in manuscript illustrations. Note the recall of the earlier passages on the Trinity: 10.1–6; 13.25–27, 53–54, and 79–81; and 24.139–44.

121–23. Oh how short is speech . . . is not enough: The poet strives to express his thought, but the power of language does not go far in such matters, and it becomes "hoarse" [*fioco*], and unexpressive as well; for this term, cf. *Inf.* 1.63: Virgil is one "who through long silence seemed hoarse." Again, the pagan failure to worship the true God (*Inf.* 1.72) was silence concerning him, and the overwhelming joy of the mystery of the vision will reduce the poet, too, to silence: he is even unable to say how far "this" (his thought) fails to convey "what I saw."

124–32. O eternal Light . . . all absorbed: These lines, the description of the third phase of the vision, are addressed to God himself (the "you" [*te*] in line 128), in the last apostrophe of him in the poem.

124–26. O eternal Light . . . love and smile: Another deep breath taken, a pause in the rhythm of this extraordinary passage, preparing the reader for the next phase of ascent. The "eternal light" is the godhead considered as a unity (lines 85–90, 109–14); the light that "thrones" is of course the Father; the "knowing" belongs especially to the Son (the Logos); the union of the two is expressed in the next pairing ("known by yourself and knowing," lines 125–26), and the Holy Spirit is the love and joy that breathes between Father and Son.

127–32. that circulation . . . all absorbed: The third phase of the vision. The circle (called a *circulation* in the sense that the circle achieves itself) of the Son, which seemed generated (Dante's word is *concetta* [conceived]) like reflected light (or a mirror image; the reference is to the eternal "begetting" of the Son) contains "within itself . . . our image": this is a vision of the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, who "was made flesh . . . became a man" (Nicene Creed; cf. John 1.14). The identity of color of the human image with that of the circle no doubt signifies the complete union of the two natures. The pilgrim's attention is entirely drawn to it. Dante's pronouns, since they have gender, avoid the ambiguity inherent in Eng. *it*, which we therefore avoid here: "in lei" [in, or by, it] refers to *effigie* [effigy], the only feminine noun in the sentence. Norman O. Brown once commented in conversation that in this passage the *Comedy* comes to a close with a "redeemed narcissism." Cf. the introductory note to lines 52–145 and the note to lines 85–93.

133–38. Like the geometer . . . enwheres itself there: The famous problem of the squaring of the circle (i.e., determining the side of a square with the same area as a given circle) is insoluble, since π is an irrational number, incommensurable with linear units. Such is the pilgrim striving to grasp the principle of what he sees.

136. such was I at that miraculous sight: For Dante's associating the terms *nova* [literally, new thing] and *nove* [nine] with the idea of miracle, see *VN* 29.

137–38. I wished to see . . . enwheres itself there: He wishes to see how the human nature and human body of Christ (who ascended to Heaven after his resurrection) fit the divine circle of the second Person of the Trinity: the human and divine natures being incommensurables, how can Christ's human nature and his resurrected body find a place there? This hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ is the fundamental mystery of Christian faith, and the pilgrim's intuition of its principle will bring the vision to its fourth phase

and its end: Christ as Omega. *Indovarsi* [to enwhere oneself] is the last—the culminating—coinage of Dante's many daring neologisms (see the notes to 4, 28, 9.7 3–81).

139–41. But my own feathers . . . its desire came: The pilgrim's own intellectual and imaginative powers, even raised so far, are not sufficient to penetrate this supreme mystery; but, like lightning, a final flash of illumination touches his mind, which receives its "desire" [*voglia*] (another reference to the truth as "the good of the intellect," *Inf.* 3.18).

The entire imaginary journey is to be understood as a gift of grace, of course (see 1.75, etc.), and this canto has insisted on the entire vision as a "trasumanare" (1.70–72). Even so, the poem has already explained (32.52–75) that each individual soul is gifted with a certain capacity for vision and beatification that can be raised by illuminating grace but never entirely transcended (cf. our note to lines 82–84). Dante thinks of the pilgrim as close to the borderline; the ultimate illumination comes, but it is even more lost to memory than what preceded it: nothing is said about it except that it happens.

139. my own feathers: "Feathers" is a metonymy for "wings"; it is the last indirect reminder in the poem that Dante is an *alagerus* (in Italian, an *Alighieri*): a wing-bearer (see *Inferno* Additional Note 6 and the note to *Inf.* 26.125); for the inevitable ambiguity of *penne* as "feathers," "wings," and "pens," see *Purg.* 24.52–59, with notes; to what extent the pun is operative here is worth some reflection.

142–45. Here my high . . . and the other stars: The poem comes to an end with four lines whose meaning is not self-evident; one thing at least is clear—that the imaginative vision ends, leaving the pilgrim's soul in an ecstatically peaceful affective state, a feeling of complete harmony and integration into the cosmos and the love of God. (Cf. lines 58–63, with note. For further discussion, see Additional Note 9.)

142–43. Here my high imagining failed of power; but: Critics do not agree on the precise sense of this verse. Many Italian critics (Sapegno, Chiavacci Leonardi, Bosco and Reggio, Pertile) take the view that the pilgrim rises to an ultimate intellectual vision of God that transcends images. Our view is that the entire intellectual vision—of the Logos, the Trinity, and the human-divine nature of Christ—has been derived from Dante's reading and, however vividly imagined, has been represented in images (in the last analysis the poem represents the entire journey to the other world as taking place through the pilgrim's *phantasia* [image-making faculty]; see our Introduction); that after line

141 there is no reference to any further illumination (cf. the introductory note to lines 52–145); and that Dante's idea is that the intellectual/imagistic phases are terminated and that the pilgrim has reached a state that is exclusively affective (as in lines 59–60); otherwise the "but" beginning line 143, which marks the transition, would be unmotivated (i.e., if there were a further intellectual ascent, the connective would not be adversative).

143, 145. già volgeva il mio disio e 'l *velle*…l'Amor: The subject of *volgeva* [was turning] is *l'Amor* [the Love], the order of subject and verb being inverted; this is not possible in English, but "the Love…" must be in the very last line. Hence the change of the active verb into its passive form.

What exactly is the distinction between "my desire and the *velle*"? The difficulty lies in the term *velle* (the infinitive, used substantively, of the Latin verb *to wish, desire,* or *will*), which appears only one other time in all Dante's works, namely in *Par.* 4.25. In our notes on that passage, we argue that the context (especially 4.1–12), involving the relations among desire, intellect, and will, require *velle* to be understood to refer to the will as determined by the intellect, and we believe it should be taken in the same sense in 33.143. "Il mio desio," then, would refer to the appetitive aspect of the soul, desire, considered independently of intellect, and the relatively impersonal nature of decision dictated by intellect would account for the absence of a possessive with *velle*. God, then, is the object of the soul's most fundamental desire [*desio*], independently of reason, and God is also the true object of intellect and of will determined by intellect [*velle*], even though intellect is now asleep. Lines 143–44 would thus refer to the fullest possible affective integration of the soul.

The split between intellect and desire is a central theme of the entire *Comedy*. As Freccero 1959 demonstrated, it first appears in *Inf.* 1.28–30; it is the principal problem confronting the souls in Purgatory: as *Purg.* 17.127–29 and 18.61–75 explain, the split in their natures must be healed so that their fundamental desire for God eliminates misdirected loves and subordinates all others to itself. Purgatory corrects desire as such, and the ascent through the spheres illuminates intellect, with the concomitant strengthening of love and joy. Thus, whether the passage refers to one motion only or to two (see Additional Note 9), it would go without saying that the motions of desire and will would no longer be opposed as formerly.

145. the Love that moves the sun and the other stars: Some critics have taken this last line of the poem to refer to the love the creation feels for God (as in Aristotle's idea that the movement of the heavens is caused entirely by the love of the movers of the spheres for the "unmoved mover"). It seems to us,

rather, that the last line of the poem must be read recalling the first mention of the sun and the stars in *Inf.* 1.39–40, where the sun is rising with the stars that were with it "when God's love first set those lovely things in motion." This would seem to be the definitive gloss on 33.145 (cf. *Consol.* 2.m.9.28–30, cited also in *Mon.* 1.9.3). As the commentators observe, each cantica of the poem ends with the word *stelle* [stars]: *Inferno* 34.139: "E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle" [And thence we came forth to look again at the stars], recalling the very beginning of the journey (*Inf.* l.38–40), and implicitly recalling the final goal. *Purgatorio* 33.145 has the pilgrim explicitly prepared: "puro e disposto a salir a le stele" [pure and made ready to rise to the stars]; and the poem as a whole ends recalling and summing up the entire journey, now completed and consummated in "the love that moves the sun and the other stars."

THE NICENE CREED

Credo in unum Deum, patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula, Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri : per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Santo ex Maria Vergine : Et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato : passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas. Et ascendit in caelum : sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos : cuius regni non erit finis. Et in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum et vivificantem : qui ex Patre et Filio simul adoratur, et conglorificatur : qui locutus est per Prophetas. Et unam sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor etiam unum baptisma in remissionem perccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum. Et vitam venturi saeculum. Amen.

[I believe in one God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of the Father, born of the Father before all time, God of God, light of the light, true God from true God, born, not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things were made. Who for the sake of us men and for our salvation descended from heaven. And he was made flesh by the Holy Spirit through the Virgin Mary, and he became a man. Crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried. And on the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. And he ascended into heaven: he sitteth at the right hand of the Father: And he shall come in glory to judge the quick and the dead; his reign shall be without end. And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and lifegiver, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who is worshipped together with the Father and the Son and has spoken through the Prophets. And in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism to the remission of sins. And I await the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting. Amen.]

NOTE

The Nicene Creed: The most divisive controversy in early Christendom was that involving the views of Arrius, who maintained that Christ, the Son, was subordinate to the Father. The division was so severe that the emperor Constantine in 323 convoked a council of all the bishops in Nicaea, in Asia Minor, to settle the matter. After endless discussions over terminology, agreement on the doctrine of the Trinity was reached and a statement of orthodox belief was drafted (and was forcibly imposed on the dissidents by the emperor). The version that has come down to us dates from about half a century later and has been further refined in its elaborate definition of the exact status of the three Persons of the Trinity, as well as the making explicit of the orthodox interpretation of the first chapter of the Gospel of John. The text is from the *Liber usualis*.

"O QUI PERPETUA MUNDUM RATIONE GUBERNAS"

(Boethius, *Consolatio Philosophiae* 3, metrum 9)

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
terrarum caelique sator, qui tempus ab aevo
ire iubes stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri,
quem non externae pepulerunt fingere causae
materiae fluitantis opus, verum insita summi
forma boni livore carens: Tu cuncta superno
ducis ab exemplo, pulchrum pulcherrimus ipse
mundum mente gerens similique in imagine formans
perfectasque iubens perfectum absolvere partes.
Tu numeris elementa ligas, ut frigora flammis,
arida conveniant liquidis, ne purior ignis
evolet aut mersas deducant pondera terras.
Tu triplicis mediam naturae cuncta moventem
conectens animam per consona membra resolvis,
quae cum secta duos motum glomeravit in orbes,
in semet reditura meat mentemque profundam
circuit et simili convertit imagine caelum.
Tu causis animas paribusque vitasque minores
provehis et levibus sublimes curribus aptans
in caelum terramque seris, quas lege benigna
ad te conversas reduci facis igne reverti.
Da, pater, augustam menti conscendere sedem,
da fontem lustrare boni, da luce reperta
in te conspicuos animi defigere visus.
Dissice terrenae nebulas et pondera molis
atque tuo splendore mica: tu namque serenum,
tu requies tranquilla piis, te cernere finis,
principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus idem.

(Text from Bieler.)

"O YOU WHO WITH PERPETUAL REASON GOVERN THE WORLD"

O You who with perpetual reason govern the world,
sower of earth and sky, who from eternity command
time to move and, fixed, give motion to all else,
whom no external causes drove to fashion
the work of fluid matter, but rather the indwelling form
of the highest Good, free of all envy: You derive all things
from the eternal example; most beautiful, You carry
in Mind the beauteous world, form it to like pattern,
bid its perfect parts to fill it out and make it complete.
You bind the elements with numbers, so that freezings
with flames,
dry things may fit together with liquid, lest the purer fire
fly up or its weight cause earth to drown.
To be the midpoint of triple Nature, to move all things,
You attach Soul and diffuse it through adapted members,
and Soul, cut in two, has globed its motion in two orbs,
goes forth to return into itself, circles about the depth
of Mind, and curves the heavens to like pattern.
With similar causes You bring forth souls and lesser
lives, and, fitting those sublime creatures to light chariots,
sow them in sky and earth, and by a kindly law,
when they turn back to You, make them return by
ascending fire.
Grant, Father, that the mind ascend to your august
throne, grant that it circle the fount of Good, grant that
finding the Light it may fix its sharpened sight
deep in You.
Dispel the clouds and weight of earthly matter
and flash forth with your splendor: for You are the
clear sky, You are the peaceful rest of the just, to see You
the Goal, the Beginning, the Mover, the Guide,
the Path, the End, the Same.

(Translated by R. M. D.)

NOTES

Boethius' *Consolatio Philosophiae* [The Consolation of Philosophy] is the masterpiece of this Roman senator, high-ranking public servant, translator of and commentator on major Greek philosophical texts, and a Christian. It was written during his imprisonment for treason by the Ostrogoth king of Italy Theodoric (he was eventually executed in AD 524), as a dialogue between the "author" and Philosophia (philosophy personified) in Menippean form (alternating prose and verse), in five books. A skillful introduction to philosophy, during the Middle Ages the *Consolatio Philosophiae* was one of the most widely studied of all the available philosophical texts. Boethius was the last important Platonic thinker of late Antiquity to study at a Greek philosophical school with an uninterrupted tradition (Justinian closed the Academy in 528; Boethius probably studied at Alexandria), and he was fully recognized as an authority by the schools of the high Middle Ages.

"O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas" is placed at the climax of Book 3, the central book of the *Consolatio* (and at the numerically central lines of the work as a whole), when Philosophia has at last succeeded in raising the "author"'s contemplation away from his personal disaster and the instability of fortune to the cosmos as a whole and to its creator. "Boethius" has just come to understand his need for the full intellectual ascent of philosophy and for illumination, and Philosophia now expresses his yearning. "O qui perpetua" was widely studied as a summary of some of the central ideas of Plato's *Timaeus,* which it presents in a Christianized Neoplatonic version particularly congenial to medieval thinkers. It was frequently commented and used as a school text; in manuscripts it is often found without the rest of the *Consolatio*. (See Courcelle 1967; all the passages of the *Timaeus* crucial to "O qui perpetua" are from the portion translated by Calcidius and thus available to Dante.)

"O qui perpetua" is a particularly clear instance of a poem consciously crafted as a microcosm, and Dante studied it with great care; its influence—formal as well as doctrinal—is discernible in his writings from as early as the *Vita nova* (see Durling/ Martinez 1990). Especially noteworthy is its influence on the proem to the cantos of the sun and on the last canto of the poem (see Dronke 1994).

One should note the intensely anaphoric structure: 1. apostrophe of invocation: *O qui* [O You who], line 1; *qui* [who], line 2; *quem* [whom], line 4; 2.

statement: *tu* [you], lines 6, 10, 13, 18; 3. petition: *da* [grant] plus infinitive, lines 22, 23 (twice); 4. renewed invocation: *tu*, lines 26, 27, and *te* [you, accusative], line 27.

1–9. O You who . . . make it complete: The first section of the poem (parallel, as Klingner 1921 pointed out, to the opening invocations of Greek and Roman pagan hymns), addresses God in terms that blend the Judaeo-Christian Creator, the demiurge [divine craftsman] of Plato's *Timaeus,* and the Neoplatonic transcendant One.

1. who . . . the world: God governs the world according to fixed, eternal principle [*ratio*]. Note how the Latin words for "O you who govern" surround the the rest of the line, and those for "perpetual reason" surround that for "world."

2–3. sower of earth . . . motion to all else: God exists in eternity; in Plato's famous phrase (*Tim.* 37d): the demiurge "took thought to make, as it were, a moving likeness of eternity . . . an everlasting likeness that moves according to number—that to which we have given the name of Time" (Cornford 1937). In Plato's account the demiurge is repeatedly said to "sow" and to be the "sower" of aspects of the world, including souls (and is referred to as the Father).

3. fixed, give motion to all else: A reference to Aristotle's "unmoved mover" (*Physics*, Book 8).

4–6. whom no external . . . free of all envy: The "indwelling form of the highest Good" is a reference to the passage in Plato's *Republic* 6.515–18 (the myth of the cave), culminating in the analogy of the eternal Form of the Good, the highest of the Forms, with the visible sun; the lines also echo *Tim.* 29: the demiurge "was good; and in the good no jealousy in any matter can ever arise. So . . . he desired that all things should come as near as possible to being like himself." (In Aristotelian terminology, this is a statement of the *final cause*—the purpose—of the creation of the world.) Cf. *Par.* 29.13–18, with notes.

6–9. You derive all things . . . make it complete: The world is formed after the model of the eternal Ideas (Forms) of perfection and beauty (*Tim.* 29a, 37a-38a) and is complete and perfect in itself (*Tim.* 33b, 37d). (Boethius is descending through the hierarchy of causes; this is a statement of the *formal cause* of the world.)

7–8. You carry . . . beauteous world: This terminology derives from Plotinus' conception of absolute Mind [*noûs*] as the first overflowing of the transcendant

One, foreign to Plato's conception; in content Boethius is drawing on the Christian doctrine of the Word [*lógos*] as the mind of God (John 1.1–3), holding the Forms of all things, itself derived from Middle Platonic ideas.

8. form it in like pattern: In fashioning the world after the eternal pattern, God is also identified as its *efficient cause*.

10–21. You bind . . . by ascending fire: If lines 1–9 described the Creator, his motive, the model, and the forming of the world, lines 10–21 describe its structure: the elements, matter (corresponding to the *material cause*); the World Soul (lines 13–17); and human souls (lines 13–21).

10–12. You bind . . . earth to drown: Based on *Tim.* 31b-32c. According to Plato, who speaks of only four elements, the elements cohere and can be transformed one into the other because of their elaborate numerical proportion. This reconciliation of opposites becomes the famous principle of *concordia discors* [discordant harmony] (see Spitzer 1963).

13–17. To be the midpoint . . . to like pattern: For Plato the world is a living creature whose visible, tangible body is the image of its soul, incarnate in matter and space; his account of its fashioning by the demiurge is a particularly elaborate part of the *Timaeus*, summarized very briefly by Boethius.

13. To be the midpoint of triple Nature: The three principles inherent in Nature are *Form* (derived from Mind), *Soul* (self-aware and self-moving), and *Body* (moved by soul).

13. to move all things: Plato's definition of soul as the principle of self-moving, criticized and rejected by Aristotle in *De anima* Book 1.

14. You attach Soul . . . adapted members: Soul is incarnate in the world. *Consona membra* [properly formed, or harmonious, members] refers primarily to the all-containing, spherical and thus perfect shape of the world (*Tim.* 32b-33b).

15–17. And Soul, cut . . . to like pattern: A very concise reference to *Tim.* 36b-c, which has the demiurge forge, like a smith, two circles—those of the Same and the Other—both made of Being, Identity, and Difference (basic intellectual categories); these circles he attaches together, the Other within and contained by the Same, at an angle like that of the Greek letter *chi* [χ], and decrees that they should move in opposite directions, the Same toward the right, the Other (subdivided into seven concentric parts) toward the left.

These intellectual/spiritual motions of the World Soul returning on itself, circling about Mind, are visible in the world's body, the image of the World Soul: the motion of the Same as the unchanging diurnal motion of the heavens, from east to west; the subdivided Other as the motion of the seven planets in their orbits from west to east, according to the circles of equator and ecliptic.

16. goes forth to return into itself: This line is the source of Dante's "sé in sé rigira" [turns itself back to itself] (*Purg.* 25.75) on the self-reflexive nature of the rational soul. The circular activity of the World Soul expresses its self-knowledge.

17. curves the heavens to like pattern: The "pattern" is also the Form of perfec-tion seen in Mind. See *Par.* 2.127–41, with notes.

18–21. With similar causes . . . by ascending fire: Based on *Tim.* 41c–42d, where the demiurge fashions myriad human souls in the same form as the World Soul but with less pure ingredients, and "sows" them in the stars and the earth, leaving to the planetary deities the task of providing bodies for them. Boethius does not mention the power of the stars. According to Cornford 1937 on *Tim.* 41e, Plato's "chariots" most probably refer to the soul's life in the star-chariots of *Phaedrus* 247–49, after which the sowing of souls on earth in incarnation takes place; Boethius does not mention the human bodies as distinct from the *currus* [chariots], and he seems to use the term to refer to human bodies, but the possibilities are left open. As Freccero 1968 observes, Guillaume de Conches in his commentary on these lines gave them the same allegorical interpretation as he did to *Timaeus* 41–42 (see our note on 4.58–60.)

19. sublime creatures: "Creatures" is added for clarity, Boethius having only *sublimes*, apparently a reference to the Platonic-Neoplatonic doctrine of the essential divinity of the soul.

20–21. by a kindly law . . . ascending fire: According to the *Timaeus*, souls who live justly will be rewarded by a happy life in the star of their sowing. Boethius here conflates the Neoplatonic return with Christian conversion, the soul returning to God (cf. 4.22–63, with notes).

21. make them return by ascending fire: "Reduci igne" means literally by "fire returning" (i.e., to its source or proper place); since the return is also an ascent (explicit in line 22), this compressed expression can also mean "return, driven by fiery desire" (soul was associated with fire, as in *Tim.* 40a, 45b). Boethius'

use of the analogy may well have contributed to Beatrice's account of the pigrim's ascent in *Par.* 1.109–41.

22–26. Grant, Father . . . with your splendor: The petitions here fall into two parts: the prayer for the ascent and vision itself (lines 22–24), and that for the elimi-nation of the chief obstacle, the heavy material body (lines 25–26).

22. Father: Renewed apostrophe, emphatic in introducing into the poem, for the first time after many pronouns, a noun naming God, the most intimate noun used to address God in pagan, Jewish, and Christian tradition (cf. *Purg.* 11.1–24, with notes).

22–24. Grant, Father . . . sight in You: A carefully modulated sequence, approaching the idea of the direct vision of God, "in te defigere visus" [to fix the sight deep in You], through three attributive nouns (*throne, fount, light*), reinforced by the anaphoric repetition of "grant" [*da*] (the figure of *climax* governs the entire series and is explicit in line 23).

22. ascend to your august throne: Liturgical and prophetic undertones here, cf. Is. 6.1–4. The force of the prefix *con-* in *conscendere* implies *complete* ascent.

23. circle the fount of Good: Lat. *lustro, lustrare* is rich in untranslatable connotations, it can refer to ritual purification and procession; it can mean "to search intensively" here (and could be so translated); and Cicero uses it in the first sense in his (fragmentary) translation of the *Timaeus* (probably known to Boethius but not to Dante) to refer to the circling of the stars. The mind is both seeking the fount and beginning to imitate the activity of the World Soul. The "fount of Good" conflates Plato's sunlike Form of the Good (see the note on lines 4–6) and Plotinus' idea of emanation as an overflowing. That all objects of desire are desired as good because to some extent they participate in the Form of the Good is basic to the Platonic tradition (see *Purg.* 17.127–35, 18.55–60, with notes).

23. finding the Light: God as the principle of illumination (cf. 1 John 1.5, *Confessions* 7.17), also reinforcing the reference to the *Republic* (see previous note).

24. fix its sharpened sight deep in You: Finally the vision itself is explicitly reached, although it is presupposed in the entire series. We derive "deep" in the translation from the intensive prefix *de-* in *defigere*. Dante cites this phrase

in the Epistle to Can Grande; for the suggestions that Dante seems to have found here for his own description of the vision of God, see the notes to 33.52–145.

25–26. Dispel . . . the clear sky: The mention of clouds and the weight of the body already implies the existence of the clear sky beyond them (Lat. *serenum* applies properly to cloudlessness; *serene* meaning "untroubled" was originally figurative).

26–28. for You are . . . the End, the Same: As Klingner pointed out, although until line 26 the poem follows the traditional three-part structure of pagan hymns (invocations [*epikléseis*], cf. lines 1–6; enumeration of the deity's deeds [*aretalogía*], cf. lines 6–21; petitions [*euchaí*], cf. lines 22–26), there is no pagan counterpart to the conclusion, which derives instead from Judaeo-Christian tradition, as in the conclusion of the Gloria of the Mass ("Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus dominus, tu solus altissimus" [For you alone are holy, you alone are lord, you alone are most high]), or the traditional, non-scriptural coda of the Lord's Prayer, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever."

27–28. You are the peaceful . . . the End, the Same: The poem ends with a series of names for God: *requies* [rest], *finis* [end, goal], *principium* [beginning], *vector* [mover], *dux* [leader, guide], *semita* [path], *terminus* [terminus, end], *idem* [the same]. As Klingner observed, the terms form a circle: they go from God as unmoved, and then as the beginning, to God as end, recapitulating the poem as a whole (note especially the references to lines 1–7). The very last line, ending with the masculine nominative *idem* (the long *i* is imposed by the meter), forms a complete sentence with an (implied) copula: "The beginning, mover, guide, path, goal [are/is] the Same [the One]." God is "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" (Apoc. 22.6), and he is "all in all" (1 Cor. 15.28).

Like its first and last lines, the poem as a whole enacts the circle of procession and return; not only in theme, in structure, too, it is a little model of the cosmos. Its first section treats God as origin of the world, the second, Soul as holding the world stable by its conversion about Mind, and the third, God as the goal of return. Soul is at the center of the world, between the principles of Mind and matter; its mediation enables them to be joined. Soul, then, holds the world together at the center by virtue of its combining the two motions of the Same and the Other; it occupies the center of the poem (lines 13–17) as well; it holds the poem together and moves the poem: it is named

as the principle of motion and the poem expresses the poet's desire for return. The division of Soul into its two motions occurs in line 15, the central line of the five on Soul. And the *last* line of the poem begins with *principium* (beginning, i.e., *alpha*), immediately preceded by *finis* [end, *omega*], as the *first* line begins with long *O* (*omega*), also a literal instance of circularity.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. The Figure of Beatrice

(*After Canto 2*)

Dante's Beatrice is perhaps the most celebrated female character in western medieval literature. Although lyric sequences featuring ladies courted by vernacular poets existed before Dante, those sequences did not shape a consistent persona for the lady; in this respect, models for Dante's treatment of Beatrice as a literary character are more easily found in Old French narrative (e.g., Guinevere of the prose *Lancelot*) than in lyric poetry. Still, Dante's naming of Beatrice in an early canzone, "I perish for the one who has the name Beatrice," testifies to the poet's continuity with troubadour poets whose ladies stimulated them to virtue and poetic excellence (Arnaut Daniel is an example; see *Purg*. 26.115–48 and notes). The Provençal habit of identifying the lady by a code name [*senhal*] guides Dante's emphasis throughout his works on the semantic force of the name *Beatrice* [she who makes blessed].

In the *Comedy* Dante enriches the image and character of Beatrice by drawing on biblical and classical traditions. The *Sapientia* of the Wisdom books of the Bible (especially as she speaks in Prov. 8.27–31, affirming her presence at the creation) and the bride (*sponsa*) of Canticles, figures associated in the Middle Ages with the Virgin Mary and with female saints, are fundamental (see *Purg*. 30.11 and note). Also influential was the Latin tradition of feminine-gendered personifications of abstract ideas: allegories of the virtues and vices in late antique Latin works such as Prudentius's *Psychomachia* are the ancestors of the speaking characters Reason and Nature in the Old French *Roman de la Rose* (finished about 1275). By far the most significant of these personifications for Dante is one that assimilated both scriptural and classical traditions: Boethius's Lady Philosophy. As will appear in what follows, she informs Beatrice's relation to the pilgrim at every turn: as a teacher, as a nurturing and consoling mother, and, in Dante's reception of Boethius's text, as a soul-friend or *amica* (see *Conv*. 2.15.12, 3.11.5–8, 12.14, 15.16–17), a sublimated intellectual lady love.

In the history of commentary on the poem, the list of abstractions Beatrice personifies has steadily grown. For commentators early and late, she almost always personifies Theology and sometimes also the pure early Church; in Charles Singleton's influential account of the "three lights" that lead the pilgrim

to God (Singleton 1958), she stands for the "second light," that of illuminating grace, the light of Revelation that comes to the pilgrim between Virgil's natural light of reason and the light of Glory from God (see 30.97–123 and note); through her the pilgrim exceeds his human limitations. But although Beatrice comes to personify a host of abstractions, she retains in the *Comedy* the humanity Dante established for her in the *Vita nova*.

Written by 1294, the *Vita nova* is Dante's account, in verse and prose, of his juvenile glimpses of Beatrice and of the crises that mark the narrator's relationship to her. On several of these occasions the protagonist produces major poetic statements: for example, the canzone after he loses Beatrice's greeting, "Donne ch'avete," inaugurates a new "style of praise" [*stile della loda*]. At the center of the book, the canzone "Donna pietosa" and its attendant prose narrate a vision of Beatrice's death and ascension to Heaven, acclaimed with the words *Osanna in excelsis*, that frames her life in scriptural terms. Subsequently she is declared analogous to the One heralded by John the Baptist, making it clear that she is a figure of Christ; at the same time, her name is declared synonymous with Love (*VN* 24.4–5). Her name is underlined throughout the work: in the first chapter, those unaware of her name refer to her spontaneously as *beatrice*; in the last, her name is the sole recoverable datum following sight of her in glory (*VN* 41.13). When, in the prose account of her death, the protagonist wakes from his delirium crying out "blessed Beatrice" [*benedetta Beatrice*] in the presence of others, he risks violating the courtly-love taboo against divulging the beloved's name (*VN* 23.13; see Martinez 1997), but establishes an alliterative formula that follows her through the *Comedy*.

Virtually all students of Dante now accept the historical existence of Beatrice. In his biography of Dante, Giovanni Boccaccio identifies her with Beatrice Portinari, the daughter of Folco Portinari and (possibly) wife of the banker Simone de' Bardi. By consulting Arabic and Syrian calendars that begin the new day at sunset and the new year in the autumn, Dante accommodates to the number nine—known in the book as Beatrice's "friendly number"—the date of her death on 8 June 1290; thus the eve of 8 June becomes 9 June, and June becomes a ninth month (*VN* 29.1; see Singleton 1949, *Vita nova* 1996). Moore (1896–1917, Vol. 2) saw the emphasis on an awkward date as verification of Beatrice's existence; in any case, Dante affirms that she "lived and died" in the city described in the book (*VN* 39.1–2). Other passages (e.g., *VN* 19.18; and cf. *Purg*. 30.127, 31.48–51) assure the reader that Beatrice possessed a body (Baldelli 1994), but Dante omits other details of her life, and never directly addresses, in relation to his devotion to her, the fact of her marriage—or, for that matter, of his own, to Gemma Donati. Indeed, one of the stated purposes of the *Convivio*, written about a decade after the *Vita nova*, is

to explain Dante's apparent fickleness in shifting his devotion from Beatrice to a "donna gentile" [noble lady] in *VN* 35–38. That this noble lady is Lady Philosophy, allegorically presented, and not a human rival to Beatrice's memory, is the poet's explicit justification for his apostasy.

By adopting in *Convivio* the figure of Lady Philosophy, Dante reflects a profound debt to Boethius's *Consolatio philosophiae*, a work about loss and exile that tackles the problem of injustice in God's universe. In the second book of *Convivio*, Dante explains the canzone "Amor che nella mente mi ragiona" (see *Purg*. 2.112 and note) as an allegory of the struggle between his memory of Beatrice and his enthusiasm for philosophy, which he explains he took up, inspired by both Cicero and Boethius, to console himself after Beatrice's death. Although the role of philosophy in *Convivio* as a distraction from Beatrice has led to considerable debate on the status of philosophy in the *Comedy* (see Scott 1990, 1995), it is fair to say that, although it is apparently antithetical in the *Convivio*, Ladies Beatrice and Philosophy become fully realigned within—indeed *as*—the Beatrice of the *Comedy*. Yet it is worth recalling that even in *Convivio* Dante has his memory of Beatrice and his love for philosophy claim *distinct*, rather than *opposed*, parts of his being: Beatrice his soul, where settled convictions dwell; Philosophy his spirit, under the influence of the heaven of Venus, inculcating the new love (*Conv*. 2.6.9).

In the *Comedy*, Beatrice first appears to the pilgrim through the words of Virgil, who relates how she had descended to Limbo to urge his rescue of the pilgrim. In Virgil's words Beatrice is addressed by Lucia in heaven as "true praise of God" [*loda di dio vera*], which introduces the "style of praise" [*stile della loda*] of *VN* to the *Comedy* as well. By Virgil's account, the rescue mission for the pilgrim originates with the Virgin Mary and is delegated to Lucia and Beatrice, the "three such blessed ladies" [*tre donne benedette*] (*Inf*. 2.124, reviving the epithet used for Beatrice in the *Vita nova*). After Beatrice's first intervention through Virgil, subsequent descents of ladies on the pilgrim's behalf extend her agency: Lucia takes the pilgrim up from the valley of negligent princes to the gate of Purgatory (9.55–58), and a "lady holy and quick" helps rescue the pilgrim from the siren in the second dream (see *Purg*. 19.25–33 and notes). Even Bernard, the pilgrim's final guide, acknowledges he was sent by Beatrice (31.64–69; see note).

Beatrice's descent to Hell on behalf of her devotee [*fedele*] is remarked upon once in each cantica, a significant pattern: Virgil asks her (*Inf*. 2.82–84) why she is willing to come down to sorrowful Limbo; she herself, when chastising the pilgrim in the Earthly Paradise, points to her descent to "the threshold of the dead" as proof of her care (30.139); and her exploit is recalled a third time when she leaves the pilgrim, and he thanks her for leaving her "footprints in

Hell" for his salvation (*Par*. 31.80–81). The recurring emphasis on her descent to a place of suffering follows Boethius, who on first seeing Lady Philosophy bursts out:

> "Teacher of all the virtues [*omnium magistra virtutum*], why," I asked, "have you come gliding down from the pole of heaven to visit me in the solitude of my exile?" (*Consol*. 1.3.3).

These words directly inspire Virgil in Limbo (*Inf*. 2.76–84 and note): "O lady of power [*donna di virtù*] . . . tell me the reason why you do not shrink from coming down here, into this center," and point to Beatrice as the lady through whom human beings transcend fortune, a key role for Philosophy in the *Consolatio* (see Singleton 1958).

Though alluded to several times (*Inf*. 9.8, 12.88, 15.88–90; see notes), Beatrice is not further named in *Inferno*, although the omission of her name is significant in that it resembles how Christ in Hell is usually referred to indirectly (see *Inferno* Additional Note 16). In *Purgatorio*, after her name is used to get past Cato, the guardian of Purgatory (with recall of her descent to Limbo, as *Purg*. 1.52–54 echoes *Inf*. 2.82–84; see notes there), Beatrice is invoked as "the light between truth and the intellect" (*Purg*. 6.43–48 and note), meaning both the "second light," of grace, and Wisdom, *Sapientia*. The various mentions of Beatrice stimulate the pilgrim's desire to climb the mountain (*Purg*. 15.77; 18.48, 73), and the ascent culminates with his passage through the fire on the circle of the lustful, driven by Virgil's mention of her name (27.36, 56). After further anticipations of her in the forms of Leah and Rachel, who represent the active and contemplative lives (see *Purg*. 28.34–148 and note) and her reception in Eden as the triumphant Christ of Palm Sunday ("*Benedictus qui venis*," recalling her reception in *VN* 23.7), Beatrice finally appears, in 30.22–39, as a rising sun wreathed in clouds, hailed with "*benedicta* are you among the daughters of Adam" (29.82–83), said of the Jewish heroine Judith and of the Virgin Mary, but also reminiscent of the *benedetta Beatrice* of *VN* 23.13.

In the climactic moment of *Purgatorio*, after addressing the pilgrim by name, Beatrice names herself, with the royal plural *guardaci* and with characteristic alliteration: "Look at us well! Truly I am, truly I am Beatrice" [*ben son, ben son Beatrice*]. Thus *Purgatorio* leads stepwise to Beatrice's second advent in the pilgrim's life, and her censorious treatment of him confirms the analogy of her coming to the Second Advent of Christ, in judgment. The midmost (ninth and tenth out of seventeen) mentions of her name in *Purgatorio* frame how her eyes reflect the enigmatic Christ-Gryphon for the pilgrim, foreshadowing the final scene of the poem. Thenceforth Beatrice's roles

multiply: in the pageants and visions of Cantos 30–32 she is the admiral of the ship of the Church; later she leads the lamentation for the removal from Rome of the Church by Clement V (33.1–3); and at *Purg*. 33.10–12 (see note) she resumes her analogy with Christ, speaking in Latin the words *modicum et non videbitis me* [A little while, and now you shall not see me] from John 16.16 and the Ascension liturgy (see Holmes 2008).

The return of Beatrice also completes the interrupted biography of the *Vita nova*. Beatrice's chastisement of the pilgrim in Cantos 30 and 31, using the phrase *vita nova* for the pilgrim's youth, unmistakably evokes that episode. Dante enlists deep-seated mythic echoes when he identifies Matelda, another of Beatrice's forerunners, with Proserpina, the daughter of Ceres lost to the underworld (*Purg*. 28.49–51; and cf. 1.7–12 and notes). In the most striking scene of the cantica, the pilgrim's adaptation to the renewed sight of Beatrice of Dido's words on seeing Aeneas, "I acknowledge the traces of the ancient flame" [*agnosco veteris vestigia flammae*], tropes Dido's inconstancy to her former husband Sichaeus as the pilgrim's constancy to Beatrice (cf. *VN* 39.2, cited above, and *Purg*. 30.139 and note). Although the pilgrim's loss of Virgil is presented as a new loss of Eden, in the larger terms of the poem, the return of Beatrice is analogous to the restoration of Eden to the human race: she is the pilgrim's earthly happiness, a Proserpina regained, and she will be his avenue to felicity in Heaven; not for nothing does her name rhyme with *felice* [happy] (see *Par*. 7.18, 25.139; *Purg*. 6.48, 30.75).

In *Paradiso* Beatrice's most consistent function is to draw the pilgrim upward with her gaze, as if Heaven were to be found in her eyes (Beatrice jokes about the pilgrim's exaggerated gazing at her in 18.21). Beatrice's eyes and smile grow brighter with the ascent, until she must suppress her smile in Saturn or incinerate her devotee (see Additional Note 7). This pattern tropes the bracing effect of the lady's glances in courtly lyric and romance, but in a deeper sense, her propellant effect renders literal Virgil's first praise of her as the one through whom mankind exceeds a sublunar place in the cosmos (*trasumanar*; *Par*. 1.76–78; see below), and continues the effect of the pilgrim's glimpse of the two natures of Christ in the Gryphon (*Purg*. 32.118–26).

Paradiso displays a wide range of behavior on Beatrice's part, usually based on previous appearances. It is often overlooked that she continues to appear as the pilgrim's beloved in the terms of the *Vita nova*, especially at 3.1–3, 5.1–15, 9.13–24, 23.49–54, 30.16–21 (see notes); but she more often acts like Lady Philosophy, "discoursing on knowledge of things human and divine" (*Consol*. 1.pr.4.4). In the center of *Paradiso*, in Mars, where the pilgrim rejoices in his family connections, Beatrice is credited by Cacciaguida—whose career Dante presents in the same terms as Boethius's (see 15.145–48 and note)—with

giving the pilgrim wings "for his high flight" (see 15.52 and note), thus making him an *alager*, a "wing bearer," which is what Lady Philosophy does for Boethius: "I shall equip your mind with wings to enable it to soar upward" (*Consol.* 4.pr.1.8–9). Dante thus associates Beatrice with Lady Philosophy as promoter of the soul's return to its origin (see also note to 15.71–72, and *Inf.* 1.30 and note), a theme announced at the beginning of the cantica, where Beatrice draws frequently on Boethius's "O qui perpetua" (cf. 2.130–32, 133–35, 133–48 and notes; see also 1.1 and note). Reliance on Boethius also appears in Beatrice's reference to Plato's account of how souls "return" to the stars from which they were born (see 4.52–54, 112–14 and notes), reflecting of course how "O qui perpetua" digests the *Timaeus* (cited by Beatrice at 4.49; see notes to "O qui perpetua," *passim*).

Dante also brings in two more significant roles for Beatrice in the midmost sphere of Heaven: compared to the Lady of Malehault, a former lover of Lancelot who espies Guinevere's transgression in the Lancelot romance (see *Inf.* 5.127 and note, *Par.* 16.13–15 and note), Beatrice again fulfills her role as a courtly lady who supervises the pilgrim's affective life. Compared to Clymene, mother to Phaethon, child of the sun god Apollo, she assumes an explicitly maternal role in relation to the filial role the pilgrim assumes early in the cantica (cf. *Par.* 1.28, and see Additional Note 7). Thus Beatrice's three salient roles are expressed in the heaven where the pilgrim learns of his genealogy, of his destiny as an exile, and of his duty as poet; a similar triple role for Beatrice recurs as an achieved synthesis elsewhere in *Paradiso* (23.1–15, see notes; cf. 12.58–69 and note).

On the heels of Justinian's narrative of the Roman eagle, Dante entrusts to Beatrice in Canto 7 her longest continuous discourse, in which she describes God's rescue of mankind from the penalty of Adam with the Incarnation of Christ. Beatrice speaks on this subject because she, like Christ, has "descended from heaven" on a salvific mission (see *Purg.* 31.106–8, *Par.* 7.29 and notes); but this role too was prepared in the *Vita nova*, where the protagonist's vision of her dead body emphasizes a degree of humility that evokes Christ's "humiliation" in the Incarnation (*VN* 23.27; see 7.119–20 and note).

If Beatrice is a theologian in Mercury, she begins as a moral philosopher and experimental natural scientist in the moon, the first sphere of *Paradiso*. Her distinction of the absolute from the conditioned will of nuns removed from their cloister entails a discussion of the freedom of the will as God's greatest gift to man (cf. 5.19–24 and note), which follows from Virgil's qualification of her as an examiner on free will at *Purg.* 18.73; and it is to her words that Dante refers in *Monarchia* 1.12.6, as if he wished to associate a uniquely emphatic self-commentary with her (see Additional Note 2). It is also in

character that Beatrice should implicitly promote the constancy that Piccarda lacked (see 3.31–130, 118–20 and notes), for the victorious return of Beatrice's image to the pilgrim at *VN* 39.1–2, dispelling the threat of the "gentle lady," was just such an affirmation of the "constancy of Reason" [*la costanzia della Ragione*] represented by Beatrice. Nor is a Boethian context for Beatrice's discourse on free will far to seek, since Lady Philosophy, in order to settle Boethius's questions, introduces the freedom of the will as a chief subject in the last two books of the *Consolatio* (see 4.pr.6.4).

Beatrice is silent in Jupiter, but the pilgrim's entry into the sphere of the stars returns Beatrice to a prominence we might expect given her account in the heaven of the moon of the entire system of spheres, a discourse that begins with, and privileges, the *primum mobile* and the fixed stars (2.112–17 and notes). This role is also prepared by earlier works. At *VN* 1.2 the very slow movement of the fixed stars is used to calculate Beatrice's age—8 and 2/3 years—when first seen by the protagonist, while at her death her relation to the number nine is derived from the presumably ideal arrangement of the nine spheres when she was created; in this sense she sums up the cosmos in herself (*VN* 29.2).

Beatrice's identification with the heavens authorizes her to direct the pilgrim's gaze downward in a retrospective of the planets that excites his scorn for the strife-ridden world he leaves behind (see *Par*. 22.124–54, 27.76–87, and especially 22.106–54 and note); on both occasions his survey returns to Beatrice's eyes, the force behind his transcendence of the earth. Of course for Dante it is Boethius "who proves the world deceptive" (10.125; see note to 10.121–29), and Beatrice's instruction of the pilgrim echoes how, in the *Consolatio*, Philosophy teaches her pupil Boethius the narrow scope and transience of fame by adapting Cicero's account of Scipio's looks back at the earth in the *Somnium Scipionis* (*Consol*. 2.pr.7, 4.m.1.4).

The same competence stands behind Beatrice's explanation to the pilgrim of the slow motion of the starry sphere as he enters the *primum mobile* at *Par*. 27.142–48, while her role in detailing the nine angelic hierarchies in Cantos 28–29 is based both on her kinship with the nine spheres and her association with the angels in both *VN* 34.1 and *Conv*. 2.9.1–2, where she is an *angela* (Carroll). Again, her expertise as a cosmologist is a competence shared with Lady Philosophy: Dante's image for the angelic hierarchies around the divine point at 28.16–36 is surely influenced by Philosophy's comparison to concentric circles of the degrees of proximity to the divine center (*Consol*. 4.pr.6.15).

The last sonnet of the *VN* imagines the protagonist going "beyond the widest-turning sphere," to glimpse Beatrice in Heaven, after which he expresses his hope for the renewed sight of her in glory (*VN* 42.3). This hope is realized

with the pilgrim's last sight of her in the *Comedy*. When Dante addresses her for the last time, it is not with the honorific *voi* he had used for her in the last cantos of *Purgatorio* and the early cantos of *Paradiso* (see note to 31.79–90), but some dozen times in twelve lines in the familiar form (five verbs, four possessive adjectives, a few pronouns). Proper for addressing the saints, the familiar forms are also plausibly those of an intimacy achieved only in the course of the poem itself, in the poet's imagination. This relationship is sealed at Beatrice's departure with her smiling glance back at him [*sorrise e riguardommi*] (31.92), as it had begun when she first "turned her eyes to him" in the *Vita nova* [*volse li occhi*] (*VN* 3.1). Thus with the one gesture begins, and all but ends, the journey of the poet's *salute*, his salvation, set on its path by Beatrice's *salute*, her greeting—a homonymy elsewhere reserved by Dante for describing how Christ, "man's salvation" rendered his salutation [*salus hominum salutabat*] (*Mon*. 1.4.4). Even in his first youth, his *vita nova*, the poet had seen in her greeting "the entirety of my blessedness" (*VN* 3.1).

R.L.M.

2. The *Paradiso* and the *Monarchia*

(*After Canto 6*)

Dante's treatise *Monarchia* sets forth a theory of world government. Using syllogisms, and deriving arguments from first principles commonly held (which Aristotle thought necessary for valid debate), Dante argues in the first book that a universal political order with a single head—a monarchy—is necessary to the well-being of the world because only a monarch can establish the universal peace required for the realization of all human potential; in the second book of *Monarchia*, Dante argues that this monarchy is the Roman Empire, whose election by God for universal rule is manifest in Rome's acquisition of world empire through conquest (which Dante describes as trial by combat); and, finally, in the third book, he argues that the authority of the Roman emperor descends directly from God, independently of the authority of the pope. This last book, which some readers have likened to the conclusion of a syllogism deduced from the premises in the first two, refutes the hierocratic arguments current in the early fourteenth century that subordinated the authority of the emperor to that of the pope.

The exact date of composition and immediate context of *Monarchia* remain difficult to determine exactly, although it was possibly written as late as 1318 in order to buttress the role of Can Grande della Scala as imperial vicar after his excommunication by Pope John XXII a few years previously (see notes to 17.76–93 and 17.88, *Monarchia* 1995 and 1998, and Cassell 2004). The close

relation of *Monarchia* to the *Paradiso*, and the strongest evidence for the late dating of the treatise, is found at *Mon*. 1.12.6, where Dante, affirming that the power to act freely is God's greatest gift to mankind, adds: "as I have already said in *Paradiso* of the *Comedy*" [*sicut in Paradiso Comedie iam dixi*]. Besides passages found in the self-glosses of *Ep*. 13, this reference to Beatrice's discussion in the heaven of the moon (*Par*. 5.19–24; see note) is the only self-citation of the *Comedy* in Dante's works, and it should remind us that Beatrice was established by Virgil in *Purgatorio* as an examiner on the topic of free will at the conclusion of a series of discussions of the subject at the center of the poem (see *Purg*. 16.67–115, 18.73–75 and notes). Implicit in all these discussions is Dante's argument, fundamental to both *Comedy* and the treatise, that the human will is only truly free, that is, unswayed by passions or vices deriving from the influence of the stars, when it follows the direction of the intellect (see *Paradiso* Additional Note 3). In the terms of *Monarchia*, this freedom is possible for mankind if an emperor disciplines the human will with the "teachings of philosophy" (*Mon*. 3.16.9–12), so making mankind happy on earth (*Mon* 1.12.6), while in Dante's heaven of the sun, a single secular ruler, Solomon, who exemplifies the practical reason, or "regal prudence," suited to the monarch (see *Par*. 13.91–96 and note, *Mon*. 1.3.10), explains the relation of intellect to will that characterizes the joy of the blessed (see 14.37–60, and note to 47–61). Given that this self-citation implies Dante's entire political doctrine, and indeed much of the content of *Paradiso*, it is reasonable to treat it both as the poet's signature and as an invitation to carefully consider the relation of the poem to the treatise.

Certain similarities in the two works might appear at first sight to be casual, such as the reference to the geometer's failure to square the circle (*Mon*. 3.3.2), which the poet uses to express his inability to grasp how divine and human natures inhere in Christ (*Par*. 33.133–35). But when, at *Mon*. 3.16.11, Dante speaks of the world as an *areola*, or "threshing-floor," using the Latin term that corresponds to Italian *aiuola*, used in the poem for the place "that makes us so fierce" (*Par*. 22.151 and 27.86; see notes), it is clear that both passages reflect Dante's view that human conflict is driven by greed. Much the same goes for the condemnation in both works of those who steal the tithes of "Christ's poor" (*Mon*. 2.10.1; *Par*. 12.93 and note), as it does for use of a learned word like *archimandrita* [chief herdsman] for the pope at *Mon*. 3.9.17, and in *Par*. 11.99 to describe Francis of Assisi—implying that the first shepherd of the Church should be poor like Francis himself. Beatrice's image for the waters of cupidity where humankind drowns, though conventional enough (see *Par*. 27.121–26 and notes) appears on cue at *Mon*. 3.16.11 ("waves of seductive greed") as the obstacle to the just rule of the Roman prince.

The impressive, often ostentatious display of logic in Dante's argumentation in *Monarchia* is also reflected in *Paradiso*. Both works quote the principle of paired contradictories as a way of expressing certainty, in *Par*. 6.19–21 of Justinian's remark that his understanding of Christ's two natures became as clear as that logical axiom (see note there), and in *Mon*. 2.10.4 and 2.11.1–3 for the key argument that Rome's acquisition of world empire was necessary if the punishment of Adam was to be just. The multiple syllogisms in *Monarchia* find their counterparts in the *Comedy* in Dante's concatenated syllogisms proving how limited is the human grasp of divine decrees (*Par*. 19.40–63; see note), while Dante's attacks in the poem on the defective syllogisms that mislead humankind at 11.1–3 (see note), on the failure to make proper distinctions (*Par*. 13.115–20; see note to 124–26), and on the tendentious biblical exegesis of heretics (13.124–29; see note to 128–29), are like those meted out to his hierocratic adversaries in *Mon*. 3.4–12. In *Monarchia* Dante adds the authority of the Bible and Aristotle to purely logical propositions, and points out that when the two forms of proof agree, the argument must be compelling (*Mon*. 2.1.7–8). In the *Comedy* the pilgrim follows a similar method in demonstrating, in the heaven of fixed stars, that he possesses the theological virtues, quoting scripture but also "syllogizing" from basic principles (see 24.61–81 and 91–96, with note to 76–78; 26.25–27 and note).

Whatever the value of comparing the three books of *Monarchia* to a formal syllogism, the format of the treatise is closely related to the three-cantica format of the major poem—the aesthetic principles laid out in *Ep*. 13.26 regarding the *forma tractatus* of the *Comedy* appear valid for the treatise as well. Readers count thirty-four principal arguments (thirty-three plus one) in the whole work, a number that recalls the cantos in each cantica of the *Comedy*. According to the best manuscripts, the chapters of the three books are symmetrically arranged (16, 11, 16; see *Monarchia* 1995) and add up to seven (16+ 11 + 16 = 43 → 4+ 3 = 7; see Singleton 1965). In the third book, the nine antihierocratic arguments are distributed according to the authorities discussed, drawn from the Old Testament (three), the New Testament (three), and from history and reason (three in all). Significant numbers structure even smaller units; nine citations prove the nobility of Aeneas (2.3.6–17)—three illustrating his virtues, three his lineage, and three the nobility of his wives Creusa, Dido, and Lavinia. Shaw notes that "in structuring his book so carefully Dante is imitating the world he lives in, which in turn mirrors its creator" (*Monarchia* 1995; see Wisdom 11.10 and Rom. 1.20, cited in Additional Note 14).

The structural intricacy of *Monarchia*, like that of the *Comedy*, is closely related to one of the principal arguments in the treatise: that the world

(including its governing structures and its history) reveals the will of God. If Rome rules the world, this is one of the "vestiges" or "imprints" of God's design, working through the art that is Nature. The *Paradiso* in turn sets forth more than once that the heavenly spheres are Nature's tools, its "hammers," and that the world mirrors the Creator as a wax seal displays the image of the ring that made it (see *Par*. 2.127–32, 7.67–75, 8.127–35, 13.67–78, and 29.22–36 and notes). Analogous figurative language is used in *Monarchia* (1.8.2, 1.9.1, 2.2.2–8, 2.6.3–8). In the heaven of Venus, the arguments from the economy and teleology of Nature, which always aims at a goal and does "nothing in vain" (*Par*. 8.100–111) are like those used in the treatise to claim the "natural" rightness of Roman monarchy (*Mon*. 1.3.3, 1.10.1, 1.16.1–3; *Par*. 8.115–26; see note).

Not by accident, Dante places this crucial idea at the midpoint of the first two books of the treatise: *Mon*. 1.8 refers to how God imparts his likeness through the creation, and *Mon*. 2.6 quotes Virgil's *Aeneid* 6.847–53 to the effect that Rome's peculiar "art" is imperial rule: "Your arts shall be: to impose the ways of peace" (in Book 3 the middle chapters limit the powers of the pope, who can neither create *ex nihilo* nor abrogate natural laws). But most fundamental for the relation of *Paradiso* and *Monarchia* is Dante's specification, at the *exact* central point (*Mon*. 2.6.6), that achieving the ends of Providence requires the cooperation of all humanity under the influence of the heavens in different geographical locations. This recapitulates the initial argument of *Monarchia* (1.3.4), as well as the idea that animates the second book, the definition of the common good as what is right (2.5.2–5), but it also summarizes the great theme of astrological influence that governs *Paradiso* (see Introduction, p. 10–13, and Additional Notes 12–14). For example, in Venus Charles Martel draws from Aristotle's idea of man as a social animal to reaffirm that political well-being requires a varied citizenry exercising different functions, and that this diversity results from the influence of the heavens (see 8.97–136 and note).

In its claim for the world-wide domain of the empire (cf. *Mon*. 2.3.17, 3.15.6), the treatise also parallels the geographic scope of the last cantica, manifest in the several looks down at, and references to, what Dante knew as the inhabited world (*Par*. 6.34–96, 9.82–93, 22.151, and 27.82–84, with notes). The detailed relation of *Monarchia* to *Paradiso* is equally panoramic; virtually every sphere exhibits at least an allusion. Since monarchy concerns "things measured in time" (*Mon*. 1.2.1), its domain is circumscribed by the *primum mobile*, in which "time . . . has its roots" (27.118–19); and Dante quotes at *Mon*. 1.11.1 Vergil's fourth Eclogue, on "Saturn's reign" during the Golden Age, an era also remembered in Saturn's sphere (*Par*. 21.26–27). But the greatest density of reference to *Monarchia* is found in the lower spheres of Dante's Heaven. How *Monarchia*

figures in the moon, Venus, and the sun we have already seen. In Mars there is reference to a historical emperor, Conrad II "the Swabian," and to Can Grande himself, the possible beneficiary of Dante's treatise, whose power to alter human destinies makes him an agent of Fortune or Providence, like the emperor himself (see 17.88–90, *Inf.* 7.73–96 and notes). More striking is the fact that the account in *Mon.* 2.3 of the bloodlines and wives of Aeneas, father of the Romans, appears to be echoed in Cacciaguida's relation of his family history and Paduan wife (15.137–38 and note), enriching the concept that governs the whole episode: the parallel between Aeneas's family and Dante's (see notes to *Par.* 15.25 and 25–27).

In Mercury, Justinian's canto-length speech is inspired by the emblem of "living justice" (6.82, 88), the "consecrated sign" (6.32) which was the eagle standard borne by Rome's legions and which, according to *Mon.* 2.10.7, inspired Augustus Caesar as well. Justinian details how under the eagle Roman heroes, including Julius Caesar, fostered Rome's glory and expanded its power through trial by combat (6.34–91; *Mon.* 2.7.9; 2.8.1–2, 15; 2.9.21). Where the treatise depicts how Roman conquest achieves the Augustan peace that prepares the birth of Christ, and guarantees, through Rome's universal authority, that Adam's sin was lawfully punished in Christ (*Mon.* 1.16, 2.10–11), the cantos in Mercury, narrating the same events, juxtapose the Roman eagle's flight through space and time (6.61–96) with the descent of Christ to the world (7.19–21). Indeed Justinian's entire account of the eagle illustrates Dante's argument at *Mon.* 2.7.8–9 that God makes known his will through signs, which include the events of history itself.

The great collective eagle of Jupiter fulfills repeated mention in Mercury of the eagle as a sign (6.32, 82, 100; cf. 19.101–2, 20.86). The "just and pious" eagle (19.13; see note) displays the basis of polity in the concord of wills (*Mon.* 1.3.8, 2.6.6–8; *Par.* 19.1–12 and notes) most vividly in its speech, which expresses with the grammatical singular a conceptual plurality ("both *I* and *mine* . . . *we* and *ours*"). This speech flows from the sacred fount of justice (*Par.* 20.19–21, with note), an idea that may be compared with *Mon.* 2.5.5, "the Roman empire is born of the fountainhead of piety" (see also 3.16.15). But it is Rhipeus's salvation (*Par.* 19.70–78; 20.67–70, 118–29 and notes), the most dramatic instance of the unfathomable ways of divine justice, that most closely reflects the treatise in its illustration of the problem of the salvation of pagans (*Mon.* 2.7.3–6). If Mercury illustrates how God's will unfolds in history, the eagle's words draw out the truths of predestination—such as Rhipeus's salvation—from the lair of the divine will (*latèbra*; see note to 19.67–70), where "they are hidden" (20.90; see also 20.130–32), for God's creation includes both "hidden and manifest" (19.42; see note).

But it is not only God's work that requires explication. Dante's forceful proposal, as he begins *Monarchia* (1.1.5), to draw the truth regarding temporal monarchy from its hiding place [*de suis enucleare latibulis*], is uniform with the disclosure of "living justice" through the discourses of the eagle. This helps explain why the revelations of God's will and the special discursive status of the eagle, at once "written" by a collectivity of just souls and the voice of the concordant just—in some sense the voice of empire itself—should follow hard upon Cacciaguida's urging to the pilgrim that he take aim at the mighty with "this cry of yours" [*tuo grido*] (17.133–34), and "make manifest" the entirety of his vision (17.128). The poet's judgments of European sovereigns in *Par*. 19.113–14 and 115–41 (see notes there) are the first fruits of Cacciaguida's encouragements of the pilgrim. And just as the writing of *Diligite iustitiam*, the charge that the heaven of justice places on the world's rulers, pauses on the M that represents the synonymy of monarchy and world, *monarchia* and *mondo*, the first dozen chapters of *Monarchia* conclude with alliterative, assonant formulations of Dante's thesis: "The well being of the world requires that there be a monarchy" [*ad bene esse mundi necesse est Monarchiam esse*] (*Mon*. 1.5.10, 1.14.11)—as if Dante's flourishes penning the treatise had been transposed to the skywriting of Jupiter (or vice versa).

The close interrelation of the polemical assertions in *Monarchia* and *Paradiso* helps to decipher the mood of Dante's reference to Emperor Henry VII in the Empyrean—for even there the subject of empire interests the poet—as one who would come to set Italy upright before it was disposed to be so improved (30.133–38). Many readers (e.g., Peters 1972) take the final reference to Henry as evidence that after his death in 1313 Dante had despaired of seeing the imperial ideal realized. But the late date of the work, its possible role in an active polemic regarding Can Grande, and most of all the pose of a combatant that Dante himself assumes in arguing his views (*Mon*. 1.1.5, 3.1.3)—as if he were one of the duelists for the Roman empire—support the view that even late in life Dante kept faith with the political idea of empire, and hoped to see it reestablished at a more auspicious historical moment. In the poem, this stance might be seen as being echoed in the pilgrim's "knighting" by Cacciaguida (see 17.124–42 and note), and especially by the poet's intention, beginning *Paradiso*, to "enter . . . upon the field [*aringo*]" (1.18; see note). The poet and the polemicist remained committed to a political regime that might bring "happiness in this life" (*Mon*. 3.16.7) or, as Wordsworth framed it five centuries later, in "the very world, which is the world / of all of us."

R.L.M.

3. The Primacy of the Intellect, the Sun, and the Circling Theologians

(After Canto 14)

It has been generally recognized that the cantos of the sun present one of the most complex and ambitious subsystems of the *Paradiso*. Their 655 verses (a number greater than is given to any other single planet) occupy a position that is close to being central among the other planets (1,116 verses on the moon, Mercury, and Venus precede them, and 1,175 verses on Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn follow them), no doubt an expression of the importance of the sun and its central position as the heart of the cosmos. The elaborate parallelism centering on the chiastically placed biographies of saint Francis and saint Dominic, with the solar symbolism associating saint Francis with the rising sun, saint Dominic with the setting one, has been fairly thoroughly explored (see Stabile 1970b, Martinez in Durling/Martinez 1990, Costa 2002). Furthermore, of the four and a half cantos devoted to the sun, three and a half feature Aquinas and Solomon, from the first circle, as speakers, and a principal subject of the other canto is saint Dominic.

The extent to which this entire system of four and a half cantos is designed to place in relief the great theme of the primacy of intellect over will has not been adequately realized. The new intellectualism of the Dominicans had met with much resistance from the Franciscans, true to Augustinian voluntarism, from the 1270s on; the Franciscans were then spurred to new forms of voluntarism, led by John Duns Scotus (1265–1308), the most radical exponent of the primacy of will, and William of Ockham; Bonaventura himself had been more moderate (for the background and details of this controversy, see Raymond 1924, Gillon 1946, Gilson 1969, Wéber 1974).

The primacy of the intellect has been a major theme of the *Comedy* since the very first canto of the *Inferno*, which emphasizes the distinction between the clarity with which the pilgrim perceives the goal of his efforts, "the delightful mountain that is origin and cause of every joy" (*Inf.* 1.77–78), and the imperfection of his will, which cannot move smoothly toward it; his left foot, representing his will, drags behind him (see Freccero 1959 for a full discussion, including many observations germane to this note). The primacy of the intellect determines the entire structure of Hell, in which fraud is punished more severely than murderous violence, because the abuse of intellect, the very essence of the human soul (see *Purg.* 25.70–75, Wéber 1974), is more serious than simple malice (failure of love).

When, at the center of the *Purgatorio*, Virgil explains the nature of love, his analysis of the psychology of human action depends in the first place on the intellect: desire of an object follows upon cognition of it:

> Your power of apprehension takes from some
> real thing an intention and unfolds it within you,
> so that it causes the mind to turn toward it;
> and if, having turned, the mind bends toward it,
> that bending is love, that is nature which by
> pleasure is first bound in you.
>
> (*Purg.* 18.22–27)

Dante's term *animo*, which we translate as "mind" above, refers to the soul as including both intellect and will (for the terminology, see our note on the passage); it is closely related to Aquinas, *ST* q. 1 a. 2). Indeed, although Dante rejects Aquinas's positions on many questions, his close adherence to Aquinas's positions on intellect is perhaps his most conspicuous and important debt to him. Hence, as our notes on Purgatory proper (including *Purgatorio* Additional Notes 6 and 7) emphasize, the training of reason (what Aristotle called the acquisition of the "right rule") is integral to the reforming of the will.

Dante's intellectualism is particularly central to the *Paradiso*. The split in the pilgrim's nature represented as the dragging of his left foot has been cured in Purgatory; his will no longer resists his intellect. Rather, it is his intellect that is being trained, "informed" [reshaped, reformed], as Beatrice says in 2.109–10, by the sunlike rays of her instruction. Such dangers as are mentioned in 4.16–27 are intellectual errors, one of which might lead him away from the true faith, dangers whose relative importance the pilgrim does not yet entirely grasp. When, in the sphere of the fixed stars, the pilgrim undergoes examination in the three theological virtues, a main emphasis is on his intellectual grasp of their essence, for clear understanding is integral to their possession. What modern terminology would naturally term the *content* of the pilgrim's belief is called by the pilgrim its *form* (24.127–28; see our notes on the passage). Everything prepares the reader for a description of the vision of God as primarily intellectual, its affective component deriving from the higher intellect.

These principles govern the entire episode in the sun, the climax and key to which is their clear, insistent assertion in Solomon's speech on the relation that will obtain among intellectual vision, fruition of the will, and the radiance of the glorified body (14.37–60). He repeatedly states that the inner, determining kernel of beatitude is the intellectual vision granted to the soul; the love and joy felt by the will are the result of the vision; and the happiness of the soul will account for the radiance of the glorified body. Everything derives from intellectual vision (see our notes on the passage). As Solomon ends his speech, a third circle gradually appears (14.67–78), surrounding the two inner

ones (the number of souls it holds and its size are not specified), expressing the joyous hope of all the blessed for that ultimate fulfillment. It is clear that the idea of the will following—indeed echoing—the intellect underlies the entire plan of the cantos of the sun, and that the three circles that one after another surround the pilgrim and Beatrice correspond to Solomon's three principles (vision, affect, and glorified body).

When, at the beginning of Canto 12, the second circle of theologians surrounds the circle led by Thomas Aquinas, it is introduced by a comparison with a double rainbow, according to which an outer rainbow (compared to Echo) is "born" from an inner one (12.9–15). The question of the relation of these similes to the two circles of theologians has not been adequately explained by the commentators, except for Buti, who clearly and correctly identifies the second circle as a reflection or result of the first circle, and thus as subordinate to it (he explains both the rainbow image and the reference to Echo in this way); the center of both rainbows is of course the sun (God), and the inner rainbow is closer to the center, like the higher orders of angels in Canto 28. Buti draws on the accepted explanation of double rainbows as reflections of the primary ones, and he is one of the very few commentators who remark on the reversal of the colors in the second bow (which we refer to the issue of primacy: in the inner rainbow, the inmost and most intense color is blue; in the outer one, the reversal of colors makes red, the color of love, inmost; this phenomenon was given its correct geometric explanation by Theodoric of Freiberg, d. 1310, but there is no evidence that Dante or Buti knew it). The second circle is said to "take "motion from its [the first's] motion," which can only mean that it moves in the same direction at the same speed. It is sometimes said that the trope calling both circles "mole" [mill wheels] indicates reverse motion, as if there were ever more than one moving wheel in an earthly mill; we believe the anomaly is intended to be recognized and questioned, especially since the second wheel is situated at the perimeter of the first.

A number of modern commentators, including Sapegno and, most recently, Chiavacci Leonardi, have adopted the view that the circles later revolve in opposite directions (Mattalia is a conspicuous exception). The idea appears to result, in the Ottimo, Benvenuto, and other early commentators, from the emphasis given in 10.7–21 to the movements of the Same (the diurnal revolution of the heavens) and the Other (the movements of the sun and planets along the ecliptic), which are indeed opposed, and the natural enough assumption that the case must be the same here. They accepted the variant "al primo" (retained by Petrocchi), which with "al poi" they understood adjectivally, as referring to the two circles. Buti also read "al primo" adjectivally but gave the

opposite interpretation, as we have seen. The first to associate 13.17–18 with *Conv.* 4.2 and *Physics* 4.10–11 seems to have been Tommaseo (1837, 1854, 1865, 2004), who quotes "Aristotle: "*Prima* and *poi* are first in space," and other passages from Book 4, from which, however, he himself does not argue for the opposed motion; his collaborator G. Antonelli asserts the difference exclusively on the basis of terminology (i.e., that in current usage *prius* and *poi* as a pair supposedly mean "forward" and "backward").

In fact, the argument rests almost entirely on the interpretation of 13.17–18:

> e amendue girarsi per maniera
> che l'uno andasse al prima e l'altro al poi
> [both revolving in such a way that one
> goes first and the other next]

It is claimed, for instance by Chiavacci Leonardi, that Dante uses the terms to mean "forward and backward" in *Conv.* 4.2.6. Here is the passage (part of Dante's commentary on "Le dolci rime d'amor ch'i' solia," line 9 ("tempo mi par d'aspettare" [it seems to me a time for waiting]):

> Time, as Aristotle says in the fourth book of the Physics, is "the number of motion, according to first and next," and "the number of celestial movement which disposes sublunar things to receive formative influence differently [at one time and at another, as exemplified by the seasons]"... And so also [do] our minds, insofar as they are founded on the complexion of our bodies, which are differently disposed at one time and at another in their following of the circular motion of the heavens.

Dante then goes on to develop the theme of the appropriateness of different types of poetic expression to different successive circumstances. Thus this passage is entirely about time as the "number" of sequence, of succession, as the Vasoli and De Robertis commentary (in *Opere minori; vol. 2. t. 1i;* 1988) quite correctly points out. It is entirely innocent of attributing to *prima* and *poi* the meanings "forward" and "backward," as opposed to "first" and "next" or "later." (According to Vignuzzi's *ED* article "Prima," in fact, there is no instance in Dante's works where *prima* means anything but "first," adverbially, and Vignuzzi himself takes *Conv.* 4.2.6 to be an exception only in being a substantive.)

In Aristotle's own discussion of time (*Physics* 4.10–14) there is no exception to the terminology of time involving "before" and "after" (but on Averroës see below). His point is that time goes only in one direction. It is, he says, the number of the unchanging motion of the "first moved," the daily revolution of the heavens, by which all other motions are caused and measured (Dante

refers to this passage in his second quotation from Aristotle; above). Place, says Aristotle, determines time, because the outer limit of the universe provides the local space within which the "first moved" has its motion. There is no mention in Book 4 of terms referring to directions of movement; the circular motion of the first moved never changes; in fact, there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that Aristotle thought of the circular movements of all the heavenly spheres (he supposed there were thirty-seven of them) as beginning from the right, with different poles and velocities, but in the same direction (again, see Freccero 1959). Chiavacci Leonardi's note on 13.18 misrepresents both the *Convivio* passage and *Physics* 4.10–14.

There is, moreover, an extremely common use of this pair of terms to indicate logical or ontological priority and dependency: for instance, the original or causal is *prius*, the derivative or caused is *posterius* (or *post*, in William of Moerbeke's translations). This is in fact by far the most frequent use of the pair in medieval intellectual texts. A good example is Aquinas's *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* q. 1 a. 2, where truth is said to be *prius* in the intellect but only *posterius* in things, independently of chronology. In connection with *Physics* 4.10–11, the following passage is significant, expanding on Aristotle, from Averroës' *Commentary*, §128:

> But you are to know that time, although it is the number of every [sort of motion], is not so in the same way but *secundum prius et posterius* [according to *prior* and *secondary*]. For it is the number of every type of motion besides movement in space because it is the number of movement in space. And if movement in space did not take place, time would not exist. . . . And if, among the various modes of movement in space, the circular movement did not take place, and, of circular movement the circular movement that is most swift, that is, the daily revolution [of the heavens], time would not exist. Thus, although time is the number of any motion whatsoever, nevertheless it applies to them as primary [*prius:* the motion of the first moved] or derivative [*posterius*: other motions] (quoted by Mansion 1934).

This seems to us the most reasonable way to understand 13.17–18: namely that the relative movements of the two circles of theologians express the primacy of intellect (*prius*), which the will now follows immediately and spontaneously (*post*).

The Italian critics who assert the difference in motion (even Sapegno and Chiavacci Leonardi) have been content to echo the readings of *Physics* 4 and *Convivio* 4.2 without making an effort to establish a coherent view of all the

cantos of the sun. To my knowledge the only modern interpretation of these cantos that attempts to integrate all their details is the impressive one set forth by John Freccero in 1968 with a great wealth of suggestive documentation, particularly concerning solar/zodiacal imagery involving Christ and his Apostles); it deserves more attention.

Freccero sees the two circles of theologians as imitating the two cosmic motions described in 10.1–12, whose identification with intellect and will goes back to Plato's *Timaeus* and is echoed in virtually every medieval cosmological discussion (for instance Sacrobosco and Michael Scott; see Thorndike 1949); he sees the "motion of the Same" as parallel with the Logos, or eternal mind, and that of "the Other" as parallel with the principle of love, and thus with the Holy Spirit. Freccero argues that in both 10.1–12 and 10.21 Dante is drawing on the idea that the motions of the cosmos and of the two circles of theologians are imitative of the inner relations of the Persons of the Trinity as mentioned in 10.49–51; in other words, that the "motion of the Same" is parallel with the begetting of the Logos by the Father ("come figlia" [how he begets]) and the "motion of the Other" with the breathing of the Holy Spirit between Father and Son ("come spira" [how he breathes]).

There are several problems with this impressive analysis. First, it seems to us perilous to suppose that Dante would attribute motions (indeed, opposing motions) to the second and third Persons of the Trinity. The doctrines concerning the Father's begetting of the Son and the breathing of the Holy Spirit between Father and Son were identified by the theologians as mysteries that can be named but which utterly transcend human understanding; the blessed in Dante's sun are said to understand these matters, but the poet/pilgrim is not.

A second problem lies in the fact that if 13.17–18 signals that the two circles move in opposite directions, that constitutes a change from their movements in 12.4–6, a change requiring explanation (but to our knowledge no commentator even attempts an explanation). This problem is deepened by the fact that, as we have seen, the entire context of Cantos 10–13 suggests that there is only one direction of revolution of the two circles (Dante repeatedly insists on the parallel with fixed stars, indeed, circumpolar ones; he compares the simultaneous motion of the two circles with the coordinated movements of human eyes; he asserts that the second circle is a reflection of the first; and he compares it with Echo; these are all strong indications of a single direction of motion).

Freccero does not discuss the possibility of a single motion; he takes for granted a double motion and disregards the implication of a change. However, once it is seen that Dante intends the reader to distinguish between the

imitation of the cosmos and the more direct imitation of God (as by the angels), many of Freccero's other observations retain their validity (for one point of difference, however, see our note on 4.28–36).

As stated above, the circle led by the Dominicans represents the primacy of intellect, that led by the Franciscans represents the will as obeying intellect. As Dante says, the two cosmic motions are a great sign of the delicate art of the Creator. But things can be expected to be different in Paradise, where it would be entirely anomalous for the will to move counter to intellect; the needs of the contingent world (cf. 10.18) are left behind. There are no contradictions in the Trinity; God is utterly unchanging, and, as we see in Canto 28, the very angels circle about him in order to become more like him, imitating but not equaling him. In fact, in this reading the two circles of theologians have a close resemblance to the angels as represented in Canto 28, circling about God. In each case the inner circle is *prius*, closer to the center and seeing more deeply. As Beatrice explains once again:

> and you are to know that they all feel delight
> according to the depth their sight reaches
> in the Truth where every intellect finds peace.
> From this you can see how beatitude is founded
> on the act of sight, not on that of love, which follows
> after (28.103–8)

In the representation of the circling of the angels in Cantos 28–29 there are differences of velocity but no indication of any differences of direction (in spite of the association of the lower orders of angels with the planets, see the note on 28.127–29). The last event in the sun—Solomon's explanation (echoed in the passage just quoted) of the structure of beatitude after the resurrection of the glorified body—brings a third circle of rejoicing souls to surround the theologians momentarily (14.67–68): forming a triad of circles that offers an interesting parallel with the angelic triads (for the association of souls with the orders of angels, see 8.26–27, with note).

In any case, in Heaven those who argued for the primacy of the will now know better (for their idea had only a relative truth and only applied, intermittently, to those *in via*, not to those *in patria*): now the will spontaneously and harmoniously takes its cue from the intellect; the inner circle is more intense because it is closer to the center; it moves first, and the outer circle echoes it and moves with it (12.14–15 and 21), not the other way around. This is the symbolism in all the cantos of the sun.

R.M.D.

4. Dante and the Liturgy

(*After Canto 15*)

The liturgy Dante knew embraced a broad range of human experience. Liturgy was conspicuous at the beginning of life in the sacrament of baptism and at its end the Office of the Dead. Feast-day processions marked high points in the year (e.g., the Candlemas, Palm Sunday, and Rogation Days processions before the Ascension of Christ). Special liturgies served for benedictions, coronations, and the dubbing of knights. Liturgy specified the positions of the body in personal devotion, as in genuflection and the striking of the breast in the *Confiteor*; its celebration required specific vestments as well as Church furniture, not to mention the church building itself. Liturgy could appeal to the eye and even to the sense of smell (see *Purg* 10.55–69 and note); in the case of the Eucharist, touch and taste were also involved. But the principal object of the liturgy is the praise and glorification of God by the congregation, and especially the symbolic reenactment of Christ's life on earth in the *circulum anni*, the yearly round of the temporal of the office from Advent and Nativity to Pentecost. Commemorated daily in the Mass is the last supper on Thursday of Holy Week, the center of all exercises, varying in its content according to the liturgical season; in this sense, the life of Christ is the vital principle, or "form" of the Church and its liturgy (*Mon*. 3.15.3).

The story of Christ's life reaches its climax in the death on the Cross and the Resurrection, which consummate the victory over Hell and death, a heroic exploit sometimes referred to as the *gesta salvatoris* [deeds of the savior]. The content of Dante's major poem broadly imitates the liturgy as a narrative that follows Christ's *gesta* in the pilgrim's descent to Hell and subsequent ascent to the stars. What Dante calls the "form of what is treated" [*forma tractatus*, *Ep*. 13.26]—the poem's division into three cantiche, with thirty-three cantos in each (plus a prologue in one), fashioned out of rhymes in *terza rima*—may also be said to have liturgical form or rhythm. If it is correct to assign Trinitarian meaning to the *forma tractatus*, Dante's inspiration may have come from the triple addresses in the liturgy: the Kyrie and Agnus Dei from the Canon of the Mass, for example, but especially the *tersanctus* (*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*) of the Mass Preface, always understood as referring to the Trinity.

Reference to liturgy has a prominent role in all three parts of the *Comedy*. The very first line of the poem, "In the middle of the journey of our life" (*Inf*. 1.1), was recognized by early commentators as an echo of King Hezekiah's sorrow over his imminent death and descent to the gates of Hell (Is. 38.10; see *Par*. 20.49–54 and note). The lament was familiar to Dante's readers because it was used as a canticle at lauds of the office of the dead and in liturgical

commemoration of Christ's descent into Hell during matins and lauds on Holy Saturday. The first line of *Inferno* thus anticipates the journey the pilgrim is about to begin in the wake of Christ's death and Resurrection. The first line of the last canto of *Inferno*, in turn, "The standards of the king of Hell go forth toward us" [*Vexilla regis prodeunt inferni*] (see *Inf.* 34.1–2 and note), describing Satan's wings, derives from a Good Friday vespers hymn also sung during the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (14 September). Bound since the dawn of time (see *Inf.* 34.61–67, 106–26 and notes), Dante's Satan testifies to Christ's victory precisely in his mimicry of the Crucifixion (see *Inf.* 34.70–96 and *Inferno* Additional Note 16).

Christ's victory over Hell is also frequently recalled in the text of *Inferno* through the various descents mentioned—the original one, that of Christ (echoed at 4.52–63, 8.124–26, 12.31–45; see notes there), but also that of Beatrice to Limbo (*Inf.* 2.82–84; see Additional Note 1), and most elaborately, the pilgrim's own penetration of lower Hell, assisted by the heavenly messenger (see *Inf.* 9.81–85 and notes). The citation of *Vexilla regis* thus concludes the narrative of Christ's victory that makes the pilgrim's descent possible, and for this reason marks the turning-point for Virgil and the pilgrim, from which they begin their ascent out of Hell (see *Inf.* 34.70–93 and note).

In *Purgatorio*, where the consequences of sin are removed, the drama of Adam's transgression and redemption informs liturgical citation and adaptation. There are liturgical borrowings throughout the cantica: the Litany of Saints and Agnus Dei (see *Purg.* 13.51, 16.19 and notes); the hymn *Summae deus clementiae* from the Saturday night office, sung by the lustful in a markedly liturgical manner (see 26.121, 127–35 and notes), and episodes from the life of the Virgin typically recalled during Advent, Nativity, and Epiphany seasons (see also *Purgatorio* Additional Note 12). As a narrative, the cantica itself depends on ritual performances during the course of the day, especially at dawn and in the evening, like some offices of the Church. Dante's most elaborate adaptation of a known liturgy is the inclusion in the last cantos of Ante-Purgatory of elements from the compline office, the last of the liturgical day (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 8). The reference to "this vale of tears" in the Marian antiphon *Salve regina* sung by the neglectful Princes resonates with its setting in a shadowy valley at evening (see *Purg.* 7.82 and note). Also sung is the hymn *Te lucis ante terminum*, which asks for protection against nocturnal sexual pollution (*Purg.* 8.13–19 and note); the liturgical text is drawn into, and helps to represent, the mystery play [*sacra rappresentazione*] that reenacts Eve's temptation by the serpent, and prepares the pilgrim's dream in the next canto, with its unsettling ambiguities (see *Purg.* 9.13–18, 31–33, 52–63 and notes).

The melancholy and anxiety that take hold as the first day on the mountain turns into night is followed by the reenactment, through the account of Statius's completion of his purgation, of Christ's birth (*Purg.* 20.145–51 and note), Crucifixion (*Purg.* 20.127–29 and note), and Resurrection (*Purg.* 20.133–41 and note), marked by the singing of the *Gloria in excelsis deo* (sung to dramatic effect at midnight Mass on Easter, after being mostly suspended during Lent). The triumph of the Resurrection is then commemorated in the procession of the Earthly Paradise, representing the history of the Church militant in time (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 12), with its focus on the acclamations *Benedictus qui venis* and *Hosanna* sung in honor of Beatrice and the Gryphon (that is, Christ). The acclamations are denotative of the processional liturgy of Palm Sunday—the episode in Christ's life that for liturgical exegetes most fully summarizes the entire *gesta* of Christ, from his Incarnation to his Ascension (implications Dante was clearly aware of in his treatment of Beatrice's assumption into heaven at *VN* 23; see *Rationale* 6.2.1–2, 6.67.9–11, and Additional Note 1; also Martinez 1997). Like the placement of liturgical elements at both the beginning and end of *Inferno*, we find significant liturgical allusions near the beginning of the second cantica, with the singing of Psalm 113 (*Purg.* 2.46–48 and note), celebrating the arrival of souls in the promised land (Dante's anagogical meaning, as in *Conv.* 2.1.6–7 and *Ep.* 13.21; see our introduction to *Purgatorio*, pp. 12–16), and at the beginning of the last canto, when the virtues around Beatrice sing the first line of Psalm 78, *Deus venerunt gentes* [God, the heathen have come], which was part of the special late medieval liturgy for the liberation of Jerusalem from Islamic control (Linder 2003), but which Dante instead employs to lament the loss of the papacy to Avignon (see *Purg.* 33.1–3 and note). Thus the joyous liberation of the individual soul at the beginning of the cantica is contrasted with the lamentable captivity of the Roman Church at its conclusion. As we shall see, Psalm 113 also inaugurates an important liturgical pattern completed in *Paradiso*.

In liturgical terms, the bliss of *Paradiso* is represented by the wedding feast of the lamb (Apoc. 19.7–9), where the "bread of angels" (Ps. 77.25, alluded to at 2.10–12; see note) will be shared with the blessed. This feast of wisdom, the celestial counterpart of the Eucharistic meal, fulfills Christ's promise during the Last Supper not to drink again of the vine until reunited with his disciples in heaven (Matt. 26.29). Because it is a *wedding* feast of the Lamb, the nuptial metaphor, too, is a persisting image for heavenly joys. The metaphor is implicit in the first sphere, that of the moon, where as nuns Piccarda and Costanza were brides of Christ (and see 3.100–102 and Additional Note 5), and in 30.135 it appears to anticipate the pilgrim's future attendance "at these nuptials." In the all-important heaven of the sun, the marriage metaphor

characterizes Francis's relation to the Church and to Poverty, and defines the act of worship itself.

In the proem to Canto 10 of *Paradiso*, the first in the sun, characterization of the opening apostrophe as a foretaste [*preliba*, 10.23] echoes the "bread of angels" of 2.10–12 and sets the table, so to speak, for what follows. At the end of the same canto, in a remarkable passage, Dante characterizes the song and gesture of *Paradiso* in relation to the liturgy using the nuptial metaphor for Christ's relation to the Church and to the soul. Describing the rotation of the circle of the theologians in the heaven of the sun, Dante compares it to the movements of a mechanical clock, and, with respect to the singing of the teachers, to the sounding of a bell:

> Then, like a clock that calls us in the hour when
> the bride of God rises [*surge*] to sing a dawn song to the
> Bridegroom, that he may love her,
> whose one part pulls and the other pushes,
> sounding *tin tin* with so sweet a note that a well-
> disposed spirit swells with love,
> so I saw that glorious wheel turning, voice
> answering voice, with tempering and sweetness
> that cannot be known
> except there, where rejoicing forevers itself.
> (10.139–48; see note)

The nocturnal rising to worship follows the recommendation of Benedict's Rule (Chapter 16), which draws from Psalm 118.62 in establishing that the office ought to be sung both day and night: "I rose at midnight [*media nocte surgebam*] to give praise to Thee." In light of the nuptial metaphor, we are justified in recalling Canticle of Canticles 3.1–2, where the voice is that of the Bride rising from her bed to search for the Bridegroom: "In my bed at night, I sought him whom my soul loveth . . . I will rise [*surgam*], and will go about the city." Dante's phrasing makes the singing of the Office of Lauds—known as *laudes matutinis*, the matinal office that ushers in the light of the new day, but better thought of as a synecdoche for all the hours of the Office, possibly for the entire liturgy—an expression of desire for Christ's embrace: for his embrace of the collective bride, the Church, and of his individual brides, human souls, according to allegories standard in the Middle Ages (see Introduction, p. 9). The text implies that longing for the embrace of the spouse is what motivates the celebration of the liturgy, indeed, all worship.

The language and placement of the passage—ten lines concluding Canto 10, in the heaven of the sun, fourth and thus central of seven planets—associates the desire of the incorporate Church, that is, all the faithful, to a cosmic appetency. Rhymes on *nota* and *rota* link the passage to others in *Purgatorio* and especially in *Paradiso* (cf. 13.10–27, 14.19–33, 28.9) where the wheeling of the heavens and the singing of the blessed and of the angels is coordinated. A relation of microcosm to macrocosm inheres in the resemblance of the bell mechanism, which is pulled and pushed [*tira e urge*], to the power that attracts the nine orders along their hierarchy, so that "all are drawn, and all draw" [*tutti tirati son, e tutti tirano*] (28.128–29; see Moevs 1999). The use of "that calls us" [*che ne chiami*] of the bell as stimulant echoes the same verb used at the beginning of the canto when the poet explains that the planets are distributed along the ecliptic orbit of the sun "so as to satisfy the world that calls for them" [*che li chiama*] (10.14–15). Implicitly compared are the desire expressed in singing the office and the relation of the heavenly spheres to the earth. If Christ is the form of the Church, it follows that the Church desires Christ as the earth yearns to be formed by the cosmic order, a yearning that was fulfilled in history when the heavens prepared the earth both for the creation of Adam and the birth of Christ (see 13.49–84 and notes, and *Mon.* 1.16, 2.10–11).

As a guest invited to the feast of the Lamb, the pilgrim's salvation is assured, as is foretold at numerous junctures (*Par.* 10.86, 15.28–30, 24.1, 25.57, 30.135 and notes). The pilgrim is met in successive spheres both by personal acquaintances and historical figures: his childhood friend Piccarda, the emperor Justinian, Charles Martel, Cunizza, Bishop Folquet, Thomas Aquinas, his great-great-grandfather, and so on. The scheme of a rising pilgrim received by the descending blessed is explicit among the contemplatives of Saturn when Peter Damiani announces that he has come "down along the degrees of the holy stairway" (21.64–65) to welcome the pilgrim. Not by accident, the next sphere, that of the fixed stars, where the poet invokes the aid of his natal constellation (22.112–23), is where the pilgrim is received by all the blessed, including Christ and Mary.

As anticipated earlier, the process of reception actually begins in *Purgatorio*, announced by the fact that the souls sing *In exitu Israël de Aegypto* as they approach the island, conveyed by the angelic boatman. The psalm was sung when bearing the bodies of the deceased to church for the office of the dead, but its text is a joyous one, and the rubrics of the last rites for the dying, which speak of the soul's approaching departure [*exitus*] from the body, reflect the idea of the soul's liberation from the corruption of earthly life as specified in Dante's exegesis of the psalm (see our introduction to *Purgatorio*, pp. 11–15).

The purgatorial terraces that follow distribute a serialized reception of the souls and of the pilgrim with nine angelic invitations, both to enter [*intrate*, *intrar*: 2.99, 3.101, 9.131, 15.35, 27.11] and to come forward [*venite*: 12.91–92, 18.43, 33.135]. The series conflates the invitation to the good servant ("enter thou [*intra*] into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. 25.21) with Christ's invitation to those who have done works of mercy for himself in others (Matt. 25.34–36): *Venite benedicti patris mei* [come ye blessed of my father]. The invitations radiate down the terraces from the angelic invitation to pass into Eden, using those same words (27.58). In *Paradiso* there are further paraphrases and allusions to Ps. 113 (see 22.94–96, 25.55–57, 31.37–39 and notes), culminating with the pilgrim's leave taking of Beatrice, when he thanks her for having drawn him from slavery to freedom (31.85; see note), and anticipating his dying day: thus all but completing the pilgrim's reception in heaven (see Additional Note 1).

This vast pattern, which embraces much of the poem, originates in the liturgy, as the funeral use of the *In exitu* psalm suggests. The welcoming of the pilgrim in *Purgatorio* and the spheres of *Paradiso* illustrates the idea, most explicit during the prayers said over the dying (the *Ordo commendationis animae*), that the souls of the blessed are met by the hosts of heaven as they rise. In the *Convivio* Dante paraphrases these commendation prayers when he imagines a virtuous soul entering Heaven after the long journey of life: "As one who comes from a long road is met by the citizens of his city before he enters the gate" (*Conv.* 4.28.5; see 5.100–108 and note). With its emphasis on the triumphant entry of the virtuous soul, the *Convivio* also echoes accounts of Christ's Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem; as Gordon Kipling observes (1999), "Each saint [is] a king who enters the celestial city in triumph to be crowned in glory." The correlation of the two moments, already explicit in the assumption of Beatrice in the *Vita nova*, making her "one of the citizens of eternal life" (see *VN* 23.7, 34.1), remains a constant of Dante's imagination.

Christ's victory, which alone makes possible entrance into Heaven and a place at the feast of the Lamb (cf. 7.46–48 and note), is also a constant referent for liturgical meaning in *Paradiso*. Justinian's singing in 7.1–3, one of three passages in the poem where an entire (or nearly entire) terzina is in Latin (cf. *Purg*. 33.10–12, *Par*. 15.28–30; see notes), most immediately celebrates the fame of soldiers in God's army such as Romeo. The text is largely a pastiche of words from the *Sanctus*, normally sung to end the Mass preface before the celebration of the Eucharist; thus in one sense the terzina prepares Beatrice's explanation in Canto 7 of how mankind was saved through the Incarnation and Atonement of Christ. The triple acclamation *Sanctus*, originating in the text of Is. 6.4, where the Seraphim cry to one another (and from Apoc. 4.8, where it is the song of the evangelists in the presence of God), was taken as

honoring the three persons of the Trinity; *Hosanna*, in turn, is identified with the reception of Christ on earth as son of David as he enters Jerusalem (*Hosanna filio David*, Matt. 21.8–9). Dante's use of both *Hosanna* and *Sanctus deus sabaoth* joins angelic to human praise of God, appropriate because it is Christ, the god-man, who appears directly to angels in heaven and in the form of the Eucharist on earth, who is being acclaimed; and it is the "God of hosts" [*deus sabaoth*] because the army on earth, the Church, is matched by the legions of angels in heaven (*Rationale* 4.34.5). The same Incarnational mystery, with the same triumphant associations, is implicit in the allusion, through *Benedictus qui venis* (part of the Mass *Sanctus*) to the Palm Sunday entry of Christ into Jerusalem, which signifies liturgically how Christ comes in the form of humble flesh, and also how he comes to take up the cross and obtain the victory of the Resurrection and prepare his future coming in judgment (*Rationale* 4.33.7; and see references above).

Sanctus and *Osanna* recur in *Paradiso*, carrying the praise of God's glory and triumph through the cantica: *Osanna* as the acclamation for both an earthly ruler, Charles Martel (8.29) and for the praise of God by the angels and the blessed (see 28.94, 119; 32.135 and notes), and the *Sanctus*, in full triple repetition, and also in the vernacular, appears after the pilgrim's success in his last exam, on Love (see notes to *Par*. 26.67–69). Justinian's use of both Latin (*Sanctus*, *deus superillustrans*, *felices ignes*) and Hebrew (*Osanna*, *sabaoth*, *mamlacoth*) is illuminated by Durandus's gloss on the *Sanctus*, which recalls the origin of liturgy itself at the hands of David and Solomon: Dante of course knew that key terms in the liturgical *Sanctus* (including *Osanna*, and the acclamation already used at *Purg*. 30.19, *Benedictus qui venis*) derived from Psalm 117, traditionally attributed to David. The mixing of Hebrew and Latin in Justinian's words thus reflects the distribution of salvation history over the OT and NT epochs, a distinction that proves crucial for Dante's conception of the *Paradiso* (see 19.103–5, 100–111; 20.103–5; 32.19–39 and notes).

R.L.M.

5. The Religious Orders in the *Paradiso*

(After Canto 23)

Despite Dante's many attacks on the papacy, it is scarcely surprising that the contemplative and ascetic ideals in various forms of organized religious life in the Middle Ages should play a significant role in the conception of the final cantica, which concludes with the imagined contemplation of God. The importance of the religious orders is confirmed in the Empyrean, which might be taken as the "head" or summit of the heavens (see 32.4–18 and note), when

Dante balances his row of Hebrew matriarchs (along with Mary, Anna, and Beatrice) with one of patriarchs who founded or wrote rules for orders of friars, monks, and canons. Pointed out to the pilgrim by Bernard of Clairvaux, and ranked under John the Baptist, the NT archetype of the ascetic life, are Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscans; Benedict of Nursia, founder of the most successful monastic order in the West, the Benedictines; and Augustine of Hippo, whose rule for a convent of nuns, set forth in his letters, was widely adopted by new orders in the later Middle Ages after new rules were prohibited in 1215 (it also furnished the basis for the Augustinian Canons, as at Saint Victor in Paris, and later for the Dominicans). Bernard of Clairvaux, who led a great expansion of the Cistercian order in the early twelfth century, would likely have been placed in the same row (see 32.34–35 and note).

Early monastic foundations in both the East and West had drawn inspiration from the example of Anthony the Great of Egypt (251–356), whose biography by Athanasius (295–373) had helped to inspire Augustine's conversion (*Confessions* 8.12). Anthony left no rule; his example was adapted for both semi-eremitical (anchoritic) and communal (cenobitic) ways of religious life by fourth- and fifth-century monastic founders such as the desert fathers Pachomius (ca. 292–348), Macarius (ca. 300–391), and John Cassian (ca. 360–435), as well as by Augustine himself. It was, however, Benedict's *Rule* (an adaptation of the lengthier *Rule of the Master* written for communities in and near Rome), that outlined the form of monastic life that dominated in the West: a stable, autonomous community within abbey walls, observing strict but humane prescriptions that reflected both the paternal responsibility before God of the abbot (Lat. *abbas*, from Aramaic *abba* [father]) for the spiritual welfare of his monks, and their filial duty to obey him (*Rule* 2, 5).

The pattern established by saint Benedict (480–527; see *Par*. 22.31–96, with notes) spread from the abbey of Monte Cassino, near Naples, and swept across Europe, though the cenobitic pattern was often combined with communities of anchorites, such as Camaldoli in the Tuscan Apennines and Fonte Avellana, where Peter Damiani resided by preference (see 21.106–35, with notes). Success and expansion in time brought relaxation, and monastic ideals were undermined by the frequency of rich pious bequests with their administrative responsibilities and their incomes. One of the richest abbeys, in Cluny in France, became the birthplace of a reform movement that subjected all its foundations, governed by priors, to the authority of the one abbot of Cluny; Cluny itself later became the wealthiest abbey in Europe, with the largest church in Christendom, its monks well clad and well fed (see *Inf*. 23.61–63 and note).

Soon more radical reform movements arose, typically centralized in organization, in the attempt to restore the clear and simple ideas of Benedict's Rule. Peter Damiani himself (d. 1072) struck out against widespread clerical and monastic concubinage and homosexuality. A powerful and fast-spreading return to the austerity of Benedict's Rule began with Robert of Molesme's (1028–1111) foundation at Cîteaux, ca. 1075 (see the notes to 31.94–111). These reformed Benedictines, subsequently known as Cistercians, were exempted from all physical work in favor strict mystical ascesis; they multiplied dramatically under the tenure of Bernard as abbot of Clairvaux. Subsequent chroniclers, such as Dominic's biographer, Jordan of Saxony, regarded the Cistercians as divinely appointed forerunners of Francis and Dominic, whose orders (founded in 1209 and 1216, respectively) enlisted vast numbers of young men to an uncloistered life centered in urban communities. Dominic adopted a preexisting rule, but Francis wrote his own, based on the love of poverty; his will was declared invalid by the papacy, and the call to poverty became controversial and divisive (see notes to 12.124, 126, 127–29); he also approved the order of nuns founded by saint Clare about 1212 (see 3.97–102, with note), as well as a tertiary or lay order (1221), which also prospered. Francis's exaltation of poverty struck a deep chord in Dante, who suffered poverty during his exile and saw in Francis's example and teaching a remedy for the vice of cupidity, rampant in an urban society increasingly under the sway of nascent capitalism (see our introduction to *Inferno*, Manselli 1970, Havely 2004).

Along with these major orders, Dante includes individuals representing other groups, such as Romuald (ca. 950–1027), founder of hermitages, monasteries, and the Camaldulensian order (22.49), Peter Lombard and Richard, canons of Saint Victor in Paris (10.106–8, 12.133 and notes). He also mentions the Hospitaller friars of saint Anthony, established in France ca. 1095 in order to care for the indigent. Prosperous preachers, they were widely thought to have diverted alms to the keeping of concubines; Dante perhaps targets their concubinage in his "fattening the pigs of saint Anthony" (29.124). Theirs is the one order Dante viewed in an exclusively negative light; like her final statement about the papacy (30.145–51; see note), Beatrice's last reference to a religious order is trenchant.

The distribution of religious orders in the *Paradiso* dramatizes Dante's emphases. The two circles of theologians of Cantos 10–14, in the sun, the fourth and central of the planets, include early followers of Francis, as well as Bonaventura (1221–74), the most influential General of the order, and the illustrious Dominicans Thomas Aquinas and Albert the Great; included also are the influential Benedictines Bede and Gratian, the Victorines Peter Lombard and Richard; Siger of Brabant, a cleric in minor orders; and Joachim

of Flora, a Cistercian who founded an even more austere order (1198) that spread out from the mother house in Calabria (see 12.139–40 and note). Thus Dante includes in the sun monks, friars, hermits, and canons, as well as a cleric and the founder of a recently established order.

The most important figures mentioned in the sun, both for Dante and in an absolute historical sense, are Francis and Dominic, the subjects of symmetrically intertwined biographies and instances of a "solar" intellect that teaches and illumines all Christendom. They are identified as the leaders of Dante's ideal program of reform, an idea shared by others who promoted the legacy especially of Francis, from the Joachites and "spiritual" Franciscans to adherents of the Empire who saw in their radical ideas a counterweight to the expanding powers of the papacy (see 12.139–40, 141 and notes).

At the planetary extremes, flanking Francis and Dominic and their followers in the sun, are the Poor Clares, Piccarda and Constance, in the moon, the first planet, and Peter Damiani and Benedict in the seventh and last, Saturn. Inspired by Francis, the Clares in the moon (astrologically cold and aqueous) represent in a way the female, lunar reflection of the Franciscans celebrated in the sun. At the other extreme, in a planet also thought astrologically cold (see Durling/Martinez 1990, Chapter 2), but associated with the Golden Age, the pilgrim meets the Camaldulensian Peter Damiani and Benedict of Nursia himself; to Benedict falls the task (as similar ones fall to Thomas and Bonaventura in the sun) of fulminating against the decline of the vast movement that sprang from him.

It is with respect to Benedict that Dante articulates a typology of the monastic vocation, first by invoking the visual figure for the ascetic approach to God, Jacob's ladder; Dante conceives of Saturn as representing an eminence from which the ladder of contemplative ascent rises out of the pilgrim's sight toward the Empyrean. This nuance reflects the fact, narrated by both Peter Damiani and Benedict, that both their monastic houses were built on high places (Mount Catria and Monte Cassino, respectively; see 21.109, 22.37 and notes), from which their cloisters "yielded" the fruits of souls reaching Heaven. Cloisters (from Lat. *claustrum* [enclosure]), thought of as the vestibules of Heaven, typify the space where the monk resides and from which he is to begin his ascent to Heaven on Jacob's ladder. But, as Dante's Benedict observes (22.73–78);

> now no one lifts his feet from earth to climb
> it, and my Rule has become a waste of paper.
> The walls that used to be abbeys have become
> caverns, and the monks' cowls are sacks full of evil flour.

These verses encapsulate the restraints of monastic life, each of which can be thought of as a kind of container: the abbey walls (including the cloister) that cenobitic monks were forbidden to leave (except for necessity and with the abbot's permission), according to the vow of *stabilitas* (*Rule* 1; also 51, 66–67; cf. *Par*. 22.49–51 and note); the monastic habit, symbolizing the new life and body of the monk, taken on after shedding his former one, and marking the passage into a life under rule (*Rule* 58);and the Rule itself, whose exhortations and prohibitions were to guide the monk at every stage of his life (*Rule* 73).

Stability and enclosure are emphasized again when Benedict speaks of Saturn itself as an ultimate cloister (22.49–52): "Here is Macarius, here is Romuald,…who fixed their feet within the cloisters and kept their hearts firm." In a sense, then, Dante thinks of the enclosed and enclosing planetary heavens (bounded by the *primum mobile* and the Empyrean) as similar to the cloister and the monastic life; similar language can be found in the moon, regarding the desire of nuns to remain inside "the sweet cloister" (3.107), enclosed in the habit (3.104), and under "the shadow of the sacred veil" (3.114). Piccarda's acceptance of her status in the heavenly hierarchy (3.70–87; see note) in a way expresses her reacquired *stabilitas* in Heaven.

The same association of the heavenly spheres with the containing structures of monastic life governs Dante's distribution of his religious in the first, fourth, and seventh heavens. Subordinate instances flank the fourth heaven: Folquet (a Cistercian abbot) is in Venus, the third heaven, and in Mars, the fifth, we find Florence governed by the bells of the Badia, the Benedictine abbey of Santa Maria (see 15.97–102 and note).

Not only is the Empyrean marked by monastic legislators, it recapitulates in its rising rows [*soglie*, *scanni*, *banchi*], the Jacob's ladder symbolizing the ascetic ascent, connected with the idea of the descent and return of divine power through the creation, the fundamental idea of Dante's cosmology (see *Paradiso* Additional Notes 3, 11, and 14). Use of Jacob's ladder as the primary symbol of monastic life goes back to Benedict's Rule (*Rule* 7) and permeates monastic literature. Both Bernard of Clairvaux, in his treatise *De gradibus humilitatis et superbiae*, and Bonaventura, in his *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* (see 12.127–29 and note), provide widely influential developments of the idea. Dante's choice of Bernard as the pilgrim's guide to the rising ranks of the heavenly rose (see 32.4–84, 21 and notes) may in part be due to his authorship of the *De gradibus*.

R.L.M.

6. The Threshold Cantos in the *Comedy*

(After Canto 30)

The world described in Dante's poem is one of graduated hierarchies of being stretching from the material elements of earth, water, air, and fire to the pinnacles of spiritual creation, the angels. The pilgrim journeys through Hell to the Empyrean along this articulated continuum, with stages for measuring progress all along the way: circles in Hell, terraces in Purgatory, and spheres in Heaven, into each of which there is typically an acknowledged transition. In this sense, the entire poem is a series of thresholds (see our introduction to *Inferno*, pp. 18–20).

Yet this effect is variously emphasized in the poem. Major transitions are found at or near the tenth canto of each cantica: in Hell, as the wayfarers approach and enter the gate of Dis (*Inf.* 9.106); in Purgatory, with admission through the gate of Peter (*Purg.* 9.73–145); and in *Paradiso*, in the ascent from the subsolar planets to the sun (cantos 9–10). Important transitions are also found near each thirtieth canto: descending from Malebolge to frozen Cocytus in Hell (*Inf.* 31.142); entering Eden and meeting Beatrice (*Purg.* 28–30); and, in *Paradiso*, passing into the Empyrean (30.46–112, discussed below).

The major transitions are prepared by treating the first nine cantos of each cantica as extended liminal zones. In Hell, this is the area outside the walls of Dis where the sins punished are of incontinence, not malice (cf. *Inf.* 11.16–111, 70–75 and notes). These first nine cantos are further marked as preliminary by including false starts: the pilgrim sets out, but pulls up in the second canto, until he is reassured by Virgil; a gate is entered at the beginning of the next canto (*Inf.* 3.1–9), but it leads into the anomalous zone of the neutrals; Limbo, too, which follows, is exceptional. Only with the next three cantos, distributed among the cardinal sins of lust, gluttony, and avarice, do we seem properly in Hell; but arrival at the river Styx begins another lengthy transition that concludes with the contested passage of the gate of Dis. *Purgatorio* exhibits similar deferrals: until the eighth canto, the pilgrim meets souls held back from reform of their vices because they delayed their repentance when alive; the pilgrim's entrance to Purgatory proper does not occur until the ninth canto, while the preceding three describe a slow transition from day into night. The first nine cantos of *Paradiso* are also set off: the souls that appear to the pilgrim in the subsolar spheres of the moon, Mercury, and Venus are within an area reached by the shadow of the earth when those planets are in opposition to the sun, a circumstance Dante uses to signify that when they were alive the virtue of the souls that appears in those planets was weakened by earthly frailty or attachment (see *Par.* 3.29–30, 9.32–33 and notes).

Similar patterns are detectable before the transitions in Cantos 30 of each cantica, though in subtler form. In Purgatory, the Earthly Paradise, not reached until Canto 28, "descends" to the wayfarers in the form of the fruit trees—slips of Edenic stock—that chastise the gluttonous (*Purg.* 24.115–18 and note). The assembly of all the saved in *Paradiso* seen in Canto 23 anticipates the congregation of the blessed in the Empyrean rose, and the ladder extending upward from Saturn (21.28–33, 22.70–75; see notes) also foreshadows the ranked orders of the rose. The ladder in fact makes visible the principle of graduated transition itself (see Additional Note 5, and *Purgatorio* Additional Notes 9 and 15).

The thresholds in or near the three tenth cantos are further marked by reference to Christ, himself a liminal figure in that his redemptive act divides history into before and after (see Additional Note 4); in each case, such allusion is seconded by the poet's increase in artistic effort as he faces the challenges offered by the more exalted (or, in *Inferno*, more terrible) reality of the subsequent phase of the journey. Christ is mentioned explicitly in *Paradiso* 10.1, while the two motions of the heavens form an (imaginary) decussated figure that suggests the Roman numeral X and the Greek letter χ (both associated in the Middle Ages with Christ); upon concluding his address to the reader opening the canto, the poet turns his attention to his task (10.25–27). Glancing back at the previous cantiche, we find parallels: in Hell, Farinata and Cavalcante rise up in their tomb, in parodic imitation of the resurrections of Christ and Adam (see *Inf.* 10.8–9, 33, 35–36 and notes), while mention of the pilgrim's "high genius" by Cavalcante (10.59) introduces the note of artistic challenge. In *Purgatorio*, the first example of humility on the terrace of Pride, and thus the first and fundamental virtue of Purgatory proper, is Mary's compliance with the divine decree, which unlocks redemption through Christ. The pilgrim's entrance into Purgatory proper is announced with a doubling of the poet's skill and effort (*Purg.* 9.70–72; see note).

In *Paradiso*, the conical shadow of earth is mentioned only at 9.118–19, where it comes to a point and disappears. Such a threshold is suited to the last cantica because it results from planetary order and the privation of light: it is an optical border, the celestial equivalent of the masonry gates that define the entrance to Hell, or the gate of Peter in *Purgatorio*, leading to purgation. But the striking idea of a shadowed area that vanishes in the full brilliance of the sun (richly exploited by Dante's treatment of Charles Martel, who is placed, in Venus, on the cusp of that shift; see note to 9.8), is also a suggestive metaphor for several previous patterns in the poem. In *Purgatorio*, for example, shadows lengthen and finally cover the mountain, leaving the souls in the valley in darkness as they recite parts of the compline

office, including the hymn *Te lucis ante terminum* [to you, before the end of day] (see Additional Note 4). While on the mountain, the pilgrim is covered by the cone of the earth's shadow during part of every day, and the loss of the sun's light (see *Inf.* 1.17–18 and note) makes his upward progress impossible (*Purg.* 7.49–59, 17.61–84 and notes; also 6.22–36). But in Purgatory nocturnal darkness is followed by the return of the sun, which is prominent in the imagery of the cantica, from the first sunrise at 2.1–9, especially dramatic after the darkness of Hell, to those implicit after the next two days (9.43–45, 10.37–39, and 27.109–14). The pilgrim, who rises lethargically on the first two days, precedes the sun on the last: he has achieved conformity with the solar schedule.

There are no sunrises in Hell, though Virgil can see the stars in his "mind's eye" (*Inf.* 7.98). On the other hand, we do find a "cone of darkness" (the phrase is Antonio Gramsci's). Though the prevailing condition of Hell is that of the loss of light (*Inf.* 4.151, 5.28), what is emphasized on entering lower Hell is a diminishing cone of light. As Farinata explains, at the end of time "the door of the future will be closed" (*Inf.* 10.107; see note), and the damned will lose their prescience. Since the present is always closed to them, all knowledge except that of their own suffering will be lost. As elsewhere in the poem, perception and knowledge are described as light: Farinata says "so much the highest leader still shines [*splende*] for us," 10.101–2) in reference to what he still knows, while Cavalcante asks whether "the sweet light" [*il dolce lume*] still strikes the eyes of his son. That one emphasizes the light remaining, the other the light that fails, profiles each character concisely.

Darkness, followed by light—or, in Hell, light that fails, leaving total darkness—thus forms a significant scheme in the poem. In a general sense, the darkness endured by the souls in Limbo before their rescue by Christ and suffered by the negligent in Purgatory as they await the next day's sunrise, and the periodically enshadowed subsolar planets in Heaven, are different illustrations of the condition of humanity awaiting the Advent of Christ, as prophesied, according to Christian exegesis, in Isaiah 9.2: "The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light; to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen." Is. 9.2 is used in the Gospel of Nicodemus, where Christ comes to those in the darkness of Limbo (see *Inf.* 4.52–63; 9.64–72, 81–85 and notes), and is adopted in the Advent and Christmas liturgies (in the O Antiphons, for example, sung on December 17–23), as well as being incorporated into the *Benedictus* canticle of Zechariah, at lauds, in anticipation of the imminent return of the day—all uses that emphasize Christ as the light that dispels all shadows. Even the rising sun of Dante's Francis was presented in the prologue to Bonaventura's mid-thirteenth-century biography

of the saint in Isaiah's words: "Francis shone like the day-star amid the clouds, and by the brilliance which radiated from him he guided those who live in darkness, in the shadow of death, to the light" (see *Par*. 11.49–54 and notes). The text of Isaiah helps to explain Dante's references to Christ, and to the light, at or near each transition to a tenth canto. The sunrises in Purgatory, and the appearance of Beatrice, first like the cloud-veiled sun but later unveiled when she mediates the sight of the two natures of Christ to the pilgrim (see 31.76–145 and note) derive from it, as does the pilgrim's passage into the full sun of *Paradiso* after the subsolar planets periodically veiled by earth's shadow, as well as the scene of Beatrice's expectation of a "sunrise" in *Paradiso* 23.1–21 (see note).

As befits passage beyond physical reality into the Empyrean, which has only "love and light" as its outer boundary, Canto 30 of *Paradiso* offers the most highly wrought continuous transition in the poem (only the entrance to Dis, in the *Inferno*, spanning two cantos, is more elaborate). The great shift registered, from the pilgrim's sight of a river of light to one of a rose of souls, entails Dante's final statement of the pattern of procession and return by which light pours from God and is reflected back to him through his creatures (cf. 1.1–3); this is rendered in both the river and in the rose by the to-and-fro action of the angels as they minister to the souls of the blessed (30.61–69 and note, 30.114). And there is poetic "return" as well: as we saw, the pilgrim's sight of the Empyrean is proposed at the outset of the poem as his goal (1.4–12 and note), and the transition into the plenitude of intellectual light accordingly recalls the beginning of the cantica, regarding the ineffability of the experience (1.7–9; 30.46, 55–60, with notes), the poet's self-comparison to Paul (1.4–7, 30.49–51 and notes), and the combined metaphors of tasting and immersion that signify plumbing the depths of Heaven (1.67–69; 30.68, 85–87 and notes).

The spectacle of the river of light draws on biblical sources and on the background of Neoplatonizing accounts of God's light pouring through the universe (see 30.61, 61–63 and notes, and Additional Notes 10–11), as well as on the pilgrim's draughts from the streams of Eden and the traditional imagery of poets nursed by the milk of the Muses (23.55–57; see also 30.82–87). To describe the pilgrim's drinking with his eyes, Dante devises one of his boldest metaphors, treating the rims of the eyelids or eyelashes as the sloping eaves [*gronde*] that channel rain from a roof (*DVE* 1.10.4 uses the metaphor in another context). The homely term that replaces the standard words for eyelids or eyelashes [*ciglio*, *cigli*] (an instance of *tapinosis*, or humble word choice; cf. 23.78 and 32.138), though held unworthy of Dante by some commentators, in fact anchors the poet's sublimely humble style at the summit of Heaven.

The drink itself tropes how the poet's imagination and tongue—in a sense, his poetic voice—are informed by the streams flowing from previous poetry: first of all Virgil, the poet hailed by the pilgrim as "so broad a river of speech" (*Inf*. 1.79–80 and note), since the "wondrous torrent" [*miro gurge*] of the river evokes several *gurgites* in Virgil's poetry (see 30.58 and note). But other antecedents are evoked as well, such as a poem by Guinizelli (30.54 and note), and the scene in the *Roman de la rose* where the dreamer stares into the pool of Narcissus (30.85–87 and note). To these confluent streams of poetic origin Dante adds ostentatious poetic artifice, like the "climax" of lines 39–41 (see note) and the triple identical rhyme *vidi* in lines 95–99, as well as the metaphorical *gronda* itself, used by Dante's vernacular predecessors (including Giacomo da Lentini; see *Purg*. 24.55–63 and note) to describe the channeling outward of the lover's tears so as to relieve his heart. The poet-lover is both a recipient of inspiration and himself a source (cf. the pilgrim's "internal fount" from which he draws to define his faith, at 24.57).

In sum, as the pilgrim-poet reaches his destination in the third cantica, the poet's own faculties cooperate with that of the descending "light of glory" to fashion the vision of the rose. Along with other suggestions in Dante's text (cf. 30.43–45 and note), the great transition of Canto 30 suggests the poetic artificiality of the Empyrean.

R.L.M.

7. The Fate of Phaethon in the *Comedy*

(After Canto 30)

As in the case of Ulysses, mentioned in all three canticle (see *Inf*. 26.112–20, *Purg*. 19.2–23, *Par*. 27.82–83 and notes, and *Inferno* Additional Note 11), Dante's interest in Ovid's Phaethon, the ill-starred child of the sun, spans all three realms of the *Comedy*, and is equally complex in implication, if more scantly treated in the literature (see Brownlee 1984, Picone 1994). Both classical narratives use the chariot/ship analogy to express the challenges of governance, an analogy ultimately based on the Platonic myth in *Phaedrus* about steering the chariot of the soul. In Dante's accounts of Ulysses and Phaethon (and of Palinurus, too; see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 4), control of the ship of state or of the Church depends on following the path set by authoritative guides; in moral terms, the "straight way" lost and sought again by the pilgrim (see *Inf*. 1.3 and note); in cosmic terms, the track of the sun along the ecliptic (with moral implications as well, of course; cf. *Inf*. 1.18, "the planet that leads us straight on every path").

Treated by Dante in *Conv*. 3.12.7 as the sensible image of God, the sun is addressed by the poet as his guide and father at *Par*. 1.28, a gesture that

prepares the identification in *Paradiso* of both poet and pilgrim with Phaethon. In a sense every man is a child of the sun, as Dante remarks, citing Aristotle's *Physics* 2.2, at *Mon.* 1.9.1: "Mankind is the son of Heaven, which is quite perfect in all its workings: for man and the sun generate man." Dante echoes this tradition in the poem when he addresses his natal stars of Gemini in the heaven of the fixed stars and calls the sun "the father of every mortal life" (24.116).

Cosmic imagery, expressing how right governance entails the personal and institutional discipline of the passions, characterizes Dante's treatment of Phaethon, both *in bono* and *in malo*. In *Inferno*, when the pilgrim mounts Geryon, the monster of fraud, he imagines the doomed fliers Icarus and Phaethon, a reflection of his fear that the journey, because it might seem madly overreaching [*folle*], could end in disaster (see *Inf.* 2.35, 8.90–91, 26.125 and notes). In that episode Virgil, when instructing Geryon on the correct path of descent, takes the role of Phaethon's father, the sun god, who in Ovid's poem attempts to teach his son the safe middle course across the heavens (*Met.* 2.129–37); Virgil's right path proves homologous with that of the sun itself (see *Inferno* Additional Note 6).

Purgatorio continues the expression of moralizing and cosmological themes through allusion to Phaethon. In his letter to the Italian cardinals, written in 1314 at about the time the *Purgatorio* was nearing completion, Dante parallels the ship of the Church with Phaethon's chariot (see *Ep.* 11.5, "You have left the track like the false charioteer Phaethon" [*non aliter quam falsus auriga Pheton exorbitastis*]) in order to describe how corrupt prelates have turned the ship of the Church "aside into byways" [*per abvia distrahentes*, *Ep.* 11.12] echoing *Met.* 2.205, "The horses snatch the chariot into byways" [*rapiunt per avia currum*]. The passage in the letter is comparable to *Purg.* 32.158–59, where the Ark of the Church, disconnected from the tree of knowledge, is dragged into the woods to signify its separation from its rightful seat by Clement V and the Avignon papacy. But this outcome had been anticipated a few cantos earlier by Dante's comparison of the car of the Church to Phaethon's chariot, which Zeus/God destroyed in order to save the earth:

> that of the Sun, which when it strayed [*sviando*] was
> burned up at the prayer of the humble earth,
> when Jove was mysteriously just. (*Purg.* 29.118–21).

The lines suggest that a future correction of the straying Church will reenact the primordial defeat of Lucifer (and cf. *Par.* 27.25–27, 30.145–48 and notes); like the author of the Old French *Ovide moralisé* (3.731–93; Boer 1915–38),

Dante reads Phaethon's destruction as an allegorical parallel to the fall of Satan (cf. *Inf.* 34.121–26, *Purg.* 12.25–27 and notes).

Dante's use of Ovid's narrative as a fable of the soul's direction emerges early in *Purgatorio* in the contrast drawn between the pilgrim's fatigue (*Purg.* 4.43, 106, and Additional Note 3) and the soaring "chariot of the sun" (4.59) which, as it traverses the constellation of Gemini, approaches its northernmost point in the sky at the summer solstice (*Purg.* 4.61–66 and note), "as long as it did not abandon its old path" (4.66). The allusion is made explicit with subsequent reference to the ecliptic as "the road along which Phaethon could not drive the chariot" (4.71–72; see note). The contrast between the pilgrim's lethargy and Phaethon's flight are part of an ambiguous presentation of the unfortunate boy, who aspires to fulfill his destiny as a child of the sun "born from heavenly stock" [*caelesti stirpe creatus*] (*Met.* 1.760). Despite his rashness, Phaethon is thus an exemplum for the struggle to transcend human limits undertaken by the pilgrim; accordingly, Virgil's explanation of the solar orbit, *Purg.* 4.61–75 (with note), meant to stimulate the pilgrim's upward movement on the mountain, again recalls Apollo instructing his son how to drive up the steep fields of heaven (*Met.* 2.129–37).

But the myth of Phaethon is principally used in the central cantos of *Purgatorio* to exemplify unruly human desire and its necessary political restraint. Dante deploys the principal terms used elsewhere in the poem to describe the error of Phaethon, but never names him: "gone astray" [*sviando*, *disvia*] (29.118, *Purg.* 16.82); "bridle" [*freno*] (*Inf.* 17.107, *Purg.* 16.94); "paths" [*strade*] (*Inf.* 16.107, *Purg.* 18.78–81); "abandons" [*abbandonare*] (*Inf.* 17.107, *Purg.* 17.136; see *Inter cantica* to *Purgatorio* 17). These terms inform Marco Lombardo's speech at the center of *Purgatorio* on the authorities of Church and Empire, the two suns that make visible "the two paths of the world and of God" (16.106–8; see note), but which have failed in their guidance. Such echoes suggest Dante's view of Phaethon's disaster as the result of personal transgression ("if the present world has gone astray [*disvia*], in you in the cause"), but enabled by the lack of authority that might restrain impulses, so that individuals are seduced by false goods "if a guide or rein [*freno*] does not turn away its love" (16.92). As an example of unruly desire, Ovid's Phaethon is a mythical parallel to Marco's "simple soul" running after what it wants (16.91–93 and note) or like "the love that abandons itself" [*s'abbandona*] to lesser goods" (*Purg.* 17.136).

In *Paradiso* Dante must confront the disorder brought about by the abuses of the Church and the defective state of the Empire. As in *Purgatorio* 29, the deviance of Phaethon adumbrates the derailment of the Church; the language of the Phaethon myth is used to emphasize how the reforming orders of Dominicans and Franciscans have strayed from the right path (see 12.112–14,

with note). In *Paradiso*, however, positive adaptations of the myth outweigh negative ones. Dante's appeal at the outset of the cantica to Christ-Apollo as "father" (*Par*. 1.28) echoes how Phaethon addresses the sun as "father Phoebus" (*Met*. 2.36). The sun is the "lamp of the world" [*lucerna del mondo*] after Phaethon's address of his father as "O great creation's universal light" [*O lux inmensi publica mundi*] (*Met*. 2.35). From the outset, too, the poet's art is taken to be a microcosm of the "art" of the sun, which "tempers and seals" [*tempera e suggella*] the waxy world (see *Par*. 1.42 and note, and *Met*. 1.770, "qui *temperat* orbem"). Phaethon's right course, taught to him by the Sun at *Met*. 2.129–37, is the same ecliptic track that is proclaimed as the basis of cosmic order in Dante's poem (*Par*. 10.1–10 and note), a passage in which Dante also draws on the language of "O qui perpetua" (see pp. 686–87).

Phaethon's explicit resemblance to the pilgrim emerges in the central canto of *Paradiso*. In *Par*. 17.1–3 Dante recalls how Phaethon, in the face of challenges to his legitimacy, questions his mother Clymene regarding his birth; that interrogation is then compared to the pilgrim's questions of Cacciaguida regarding the prophecies of exile heard during the pilgrim's journey (summed up in 17.19–24; see note). Phaethon's grim fate persists in the background: the disastrous career of Phaethon is foretold upon entry in Mars when Cacciaguida's meteoric motion toward his descendant echoes Ovid's depiction of Phaethon falling after being struck by Jove's lightning (see 15.13–18 and note), and Dante introduces Phaethon with mention of the fatal indulgence shown him by his father in swearing an inviolable oath to grant any gift (*Par*. 17.1–3). Cacciaguida compares the pilgrim's future exile to that of Hippolytus, who like Phaethon was flung from his chariot and killed (the two accounts share terminology concerning the breakup of the chariots; see *Met*. 2.315–18 and 15.518–32; for Dante's cognizance of Ovid's *Virbius*, the "resurrected" Hippolytus, see Chiarenza 1966 and 1983).

Dante's adaptation of Ovid's myth to represent his own career is consistent with his treatment of his exile as a trial that he is destined to transcend (see 17.55–60, 94–99 and notes, and our introduction to *Inferno*, p. 19). Indeed both Phaethon's audacity—possibly inspired by Ovid's mention of Phaethon's epitaph, acknowledging his lofty ambition (*Met*. 2.326–28)—and his disaster are digested into the account, spoken by Cacciaguida, of the poet-pilgrim's election to a noble task that will require extreme self-sacrifice.

In these terms, burning in the charity of Heaven is a version of Phaethon's destiny, struck and combusted by God's fire. The assimilation of the pilgrim's destiny with Phaethon's is anticipated in *Purgatorio*: in the first dream, the eagle of Zeus "descended terrible as lightning" not to destroy, but to embrace the pilgrim and bear him to the fire (9.28–33; see notes). In *Paradiso*, Phaethon's

fate nearly becomes that of the pilgrim, who risks the fate of Semele, burned up by the glory of Zeus; should Beatrice flash her full smile at him, he "would be a branch shattered by a thunderbolt" (see *Par*. 21.4–12 and note; and see Brownlee 1986). From this perspective, Phaethon's death by fire might be compared to the immolation of Hercules, sometimes allegorized as an account of purification and deification analogous to Christ's human suffering in the Passion (see *Inf*. 9.98, *Purg*. 9.101–2 and notes).

If the pilgrim is fiery like Phaethon because of his lineage, desire, and courage, it is appropriate that he be drawn upward to the Empyrean, the place of divine fire, as his destination. This is one implication of the pilgrim's being compared to rising fire in the first canto (*Par*. 1.115, 139–41), where his kinship with lightning is also suggested (1.91–93 and note). Thus, too, in the last canto, the grace that grants the pilgrim sight of the mystery of the two natures of Christ is like a lightning bolt: "my mind was struck by a flash [*percossa da un fulgore*], in which my desire came" (33.140–41; see note). Both in terms of the harsh destiny prophesied for him, to be cast down in exile, and in his prospects for attaining an exalted vision at the summit of Heaven, the poet is bound to participate in Phaethon's fate, consumed by and assimilated to the "father of all mortal lives," Christ-Apollo.

R.L.M.

8. Circle—Cross—Eagle—Scales: Images in the *Paradiso*

Excluding the rose in the Empyrean, the nine heavens of Dante's *Paradiso* are symmetrically arranged: the lowest three spheres and their planets, periodically swept by the conical shadow of earth, are balanced by the highest three spheres, which are linked by the golden ladder that stretches from the fixed stars to the boundary of the Empyrean. The shadow rises from the earth toward the sun as it diminishes, and the ladder is used for souls shown both ascending and descending from heaven, which again suggests, albeit impressionistically, the pattern of procession and return that organizes the poem (see Additional Notes 4, 10, 11). Within these two extreme zones are three spheres. For each, Dante invents a suggestive visual emblem: two (and finally three) circles of souls in the sun, the cross of light for the soldiers of the faith in Mars, and, as the third and final stage of the skywriting display in Jupiter (with intermediate phases as the capital M and the lily), the eagle made up of souls notable for their justice (see Additional Note 2).

Since the images in the three central heavens include the blessed themselves, who are placed in the spheres "to signify" (4.38), the images should be viewed in light of the doctrine of accommodation that Beatrice expounds to the pilgrim at 4.37–48 (see note, and also note to 4.40–42): that is, as provi-

sional theophanies for instructing the pilgrim, not physical structures existing in the heavens. As poetic inventions the images are richly suggestive. All include the blessed as luminous phenomena: sparks, candle flames, and precious stones in the sun, shining jewels and fires in Mars, and again precious gems and lights in Jupiter. More specifically, each image is conceived in terms derived from astronomical reality: in the sun, the blessed are "stars around firm poles" (10.78) and "burning suns" (10.76–77, with note); in Mars, they are ignited by the sun (15.76, 18.105), and compared to the stars of the Milky Way (14.97–102; see note) and to a shooting star (15.13–18; see note). In Jupiter they are likened to the stars that appear in the sky after sunset (20.1–15 and note). In the case of the second circle of teachers, described in 13.1–24 (see note), derivation from astronomical reality is explicit: Dante invites the reader to imagine taking the brightest known stars and assembling them in imitation of the constellation of Ariadne's crown. As in the discussion of imagination in *Purg*. 17.13–18, which relates that faculty to the influence of the heavens (see Introduction, pp. 18–19), the passage reflects the poet's own crafting of his imagery. Dante's poetry is quite literally astronomical, poetry fashioned from the stars (see Martinez 1991a, Cornish 2000).

A striking feature of the three central images is their congruency. That is, the circles in the sun, compared both to airy rainbows and to heavy millstones, can be fitted to the *tondo*, the circle of the sphere within which the cross of Mars is subsequently inscribed ("the joinings of quadrants in a circle" [*tondo*], 14.102); these in turn can be fitted to the sphere of Jupiter, which has its focus in the round eye of the eagle (*tondo*, 20.68) but is embraced in the larger sense by the circles described by the Creator, the divine geometer ("He who revolved the compasses about the limit of the world" [*mondo*], 19.40; see note to 19.40–45).

This congruency of circles of course reflects Dante's emphasis on the circle throughout the poem; the Empyrean heaven, too, will appear round [*tonda*] at 30.90. But Dante pushes the congruencies much further: both cross and eagle leave traces in the other central spheres as well. The cosmic cross in Mars is prepared by the intersecting cosmic circles in 10.7–9, and by mention of the Cross in the canto of Francis (11.72). The arms of the cross then reappear in the outstretched wings of the eagle (19.1–3: "with open wings"; see note there, and cf. *Purg*. 3.122 and note), while the Cross as the division of the Old Law from the New is mentioned at 19.103–5 (see note there). Additional instances of the eagle are harder to discern; yet the eagle of Jupiter is clearly prepared, within Mars, by the imperial eagle surmounting Can Grande's coat of arms at 17.72; and given that Julius Caesar bears, and is even conflated with, the Roman eagle (see 6.55–63 and note), the periphrastic mention of Caesar's visit to Amyclas

suggests a brief glimpse of the eagle in the sun (see 11.67–69 and note). The congruency of the three spheres is distinctly marked in verbal terms by the identical triple rhyme on *Cristo* found in each, and which in cantos 14 and 19 terminates like-numbered verses (104, 106, 108), enhancing the circularity of the *terza rima* (in that the *identical* rhyme word returns; see Freccero 1983).

It is not through visual, verbal, or conceptual imagery alone that Dante constructs congruencies between the three central spheres, however. Although music and singing are general to Dante's Heaven, references to music in the three central heavens are especially elaborate. Dante's ideas regarding the meaning of music in his heavens came down to him, perhaps through intermediaries, from Boethius's *Institutio musica*, the standard medieval textbook for music as a liberal art. Boethius accepted Platonic ideas of a mathematically based harmony of the spheres, of the elements, and of the seasons as the ideal form of music, which was to be imitated by the harmony of soul and body in the human being, and, at the lowest level, by instrumental music (see *Institutio musica* 1.2–5, Spitzer 1963, Heilbronn 1983,; see also notes to 15.1–9 and 20.13–30). All three "musics" depend on the mixture, or "tempering," of high and low tones, or other kinds of extremes (such as hot and cold among material elements), to achieve harmony. Thus Dante's pilgrim hears the "tempered" and "distinct" tones of the spheres in 1.42, while the pilgrim "tempers" sweet with bitter news about his exile (18.1–3), achieving equanimity before the challenges facing him; voices and instruments are also "tempered" (as in *DVE* 2.4.9, "with strings stretched taut" [*tensis fidibus ad supremum*]). Notions of equality and balance are also implicit in the musical formulations Dante knew: for Boethius, "harmony is the reduction to single concord of sounds dissimilar among themselves" [*Est enim consonantia dissimilium inter se vocum in unum redacta concordia*] (*Institutio musica* 1.3).

The central spheres contain instances of instrumental and "human" music, as well as playing a part in the "music of the spheres." Instrumental music is found in the comparison of the songs of the whirling teachers in the sun to the *tin tin* of the bell that awakens the Church (10.143); this is then modified in the *tintinno* of the harp and lyre music of the Martian cross (14.118–23), which becomes in turn the pipe and lyre music compared to the eagle's speech, where the onomatopoetic effect of the solar and Martian instances continues, but with the rhyming words *flailli, lapilli, squilli* [flutes, little gems, bells] (20.16–18). That this instrumental and vocal music is tempered is mentioned in the sun at 10.146, referring to the blend of voices as the souls turn [*voce a voce in tempra*], and in Mars, at 14.118–19, of the viol and harp "stretched and tuned" [*a tempra tesa*].

By means of the notion of "tempering," all these sounds have both ethical resonance—they reflect *musica humana*—and share in the cosmic *musica*

mundana as well. In the sun, *tin tin* stirs the zeal to worship. The contrast Dante draws in Mars between the imbalance of knowledge and affection in the pilgrim, who does not yet know his ancestor's name, and Cacciaguida, who because of contemplating the "first Equality" within God has those powers in equilibrium (15.73–75), alludes to the moral tempering or balance within the soul, an emphasis that points to one of the chief themes of the cantica (see Additional Note 3). Finally, the planet Jupiter, which signifies (and encourages) just action, "tempers" hot Mars and cold Saturn (22.145). But this means it also participates in the cosmic *musica mundana* as the "temperate sixth star" [*temprata stella sesta*] (18.68). The sun, too, has a tempering effect on the whole cosmos, as Dante points out at the beginning of the cantica (1.42, "tempers and seals"); while Mars, being midmost among the nine spheres, displays the most beautiful proportion (1:2) and so represents the art of music in the universe (cf. *Conv*. 2.13.20–24).

Like the triple *Cristo* rhyme that seals the three central spheres, the musical references in the three planets are also linked to the idea of the Cross (see Hart 1990). Because they describe the Cross, the viol and harp "stretched and tuned" (14.118) are inevitably an instance of the traditional conception of the cross as a tempered instrument, so understood because Christ's body was stretched out on it, like the strings of a lyre or a psaltery (see notes to 15.4–6, and Heilbronn 1978).

In the Cross, moreover, both a tempered musical instrument and the scales of justice intersect, so to speak. Although Dante illustrates the management of vows with mention of the scales at *Par*. 4.138 and 5.62 (using two different words, *bilancia* and *statera*), both instances look forward to 13.41–42, in the heaven of the sun, which describes Christ's sacrifice and atonement, through which the guilt of Adam is counterbalanced: Christ "so satisfied the law that it outweighs all guilt upon the scales."

Dante's formulation depends on the traditional idea of the cross as a balance [*statera Christi*]. The topic is found in *Vexilla regis prodeunt*, the sixth-century hymn whose first line begins the last canto of *Inferno* (see *Inf*. 34.1 and note). Christ's body on the Cross weighs out the ransom for mankind (lines 21–24):

> the Cross was made a balance for his body [*statera facta corporis*],
> and seized the prey from Tartarus. [*predam tulitque Tartari*].

This image can be adapted to moral tempering as well; for the blessed, love and understanding "became of one weight for each of you" (15.75), that is, they are in perfect balance.

With emphases on the tempering of the pilgrim and the image of the cross, the scales figure prominently in the sun and in Mars; subsequent references in *Paradiso* describe the motions of the heavens with the image of a balance (see 29.1–9, 30.2–3 and notes). But does the idea of the balance play a role in Jupiter, dedicated as it is to Justice, whose emblem is traditionally the scales? Dante had read in Aristotle's *Ethics* descriptions of fairness and justice using the language of equality and mathematical proportion ("what is just is equal," *Nichomachean Ethics* 5.3; and see *Mon*. 1.11.3), and Dante had long associated the Roman empire, symbolized by the eagle, with both justice and the philosophical truth best expounded by Aristotle (see *Conv*. 4.4.1–5, 4.6.18; Additional Note 2; and Ascoli 2008).

The image of the scales is implicit in the account of the Last Judgment Dante gives when condemning bad monarchs, whose evil deeds outweigh their good ones a thousand to one (19.127–29 and note); this concept was widely illustrated in Christian iconography in the image of Michael the archangel weighing souls in a balance to determine their assignment to Heaven or Hell (the *psychostasis*). Perhaps the most poetic of these implicit images of balance is the writing in the planet itself, displaying the words in the imperative mood of Wisdom 1.1:

> "*DILIGITE IUSTITIAM*" were the first
> verb and noun of the whole depiction,
> "*QUI IUDICATIS TERRAM*" were the last (18.91–93).

Dante was of course attentive to the number of syllables in his lines (see *DVE* 2.5.3). The two Latin phrases in the passage cited above are distributed among two lines of eleven syllables, with eight syllables of Latin in line 91 and seven in line 93. But line 91 has seventeen Latin letters, and line 93 has eighteen, establishing a chiastic equilibrium (8/17 : 7/18). Both rhyming words have three syllables, and mean "first" [*primai*] and "last" [*sezzai*], as in the divine name Alpha and Omega, balancing beginning with the end (see Additional Note 14), while the terms for verb [*verbo*] and noun [*nome*] in the first hemistich of line 92 suggest a syntactical equipoise. Finally, the Latin words related to justice, both nominal direct object [*iustitiam*] and conjugated verb [*iudicatis*], have four syllables and nine letters, with *iustitiam* further balanced by having a palindromic central ternary of letters. The writing finishes on the letter M, twelfth and midmost letter of the 23-letter Latin alphabet, and itself a balanced grapheme; it even resembles a pair of scales. Its numerical value as a Roman numeral (1,000) is offered at 19.29 as one of the weights in balancing the good and evil deeds of King Charles II, "the Lame": though in that case, it

testifies to a gross disproportion. Dante's skywriting represents the balance of justice in the words that it flashes forth to the pilgrim and the world (for further implications of this, see Additional Note 2). Only twenty years after Dante's death, Aristotle's formulas of equity would be made visible to the citizens of Siena in the Palazzo Pubblico frescoes of Justice with her scales surmounted by the text of Wisdom 1.1, a scene plausibly inspired by Dante's skywriting in the heaven of Jupiter (see Brugnolo 1995).

R.L.M.

9. The Final Image

A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa, 142
ma già volgeva il mio disio e 'l velle,
sì come rota ch' igualmente è mossa,
l'Amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle. 145

142 [Here my high imagining failed of power, but
already my desire and the velle were turned, like
a wheel being moved evenly,
145 by the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.]

In an important article (see Dronke 1994, Pertile 1995a, and Hollander), John Freccero (1964) sets forth an unusual interpretation of these lines. He argues that a wheel can be considered to have two motions, that of its circumference when it rotates on its axis, and the forward or backward motion of its center and axis. The first of these motions would correspond to the soul's rotation about its own center (which of course is God), the second to the revolution of the soul, participating in the motion of "the sun and the other stars" (also circular) about the center of the cosmos (which of course, though physically the earth, is metaphysically, and thus more truly, God). In this view there would be two motions, harmonized and equal with each other, thus "like a wheel being moved evenly" One problem that is not fully settled in the traditional approach is the disposition in the simile of the two things said to be turned ("il mio desio e 'l velle" [my desire and the *velle*]), and Freccero's interpretation has the advantage of taking this duality more fully into account (though, like Dronke, we disagree with Freccero's identification of the referents of these two terms).

Freccero argues that the ultimate model for this conception would be *Timaeus* 40a–b, according to which the Demiurge

> assigned to each [of the incarnate lesser gods] two motions: one uniform in the same place, as each always thinks the same thoughts about

> the same things; the other a forward motion as each is subjected to the revolution of the Same and uniform (tr. Cornford 1937).

(These are not the same two motions as are discussed in *Tim.* 36b–36d [10.1–27], and as Cornford observes in his commentary, the continuation of the passage makes it clear that they are attributed to the planets as well as to the fixed stars.) Freccero adduces supporting passages also from Calcidius's translation, the Pseudo-Dionysius, Aquinas, and others.

Pertile summarizes Freccero's interpretation, which he rejects without offering a detailed refutation. His proposal is that there are indeed two motions, that of the soul and that of the cosmos, which the soul is imitating (he cites *Consolatio* 2.m.9—see our note on 33.145). This reading seems to us essentially the same as the traditional one, which cannot be said to disregard line 145. Dronke 1994, however, accepts Freccero's interpretation (except for his treatment of *desio* and *velle*). (Hollander mentions the article in relation with a subsidiary point; he does not discuss the central argument.)

To Freccero's interpretation it might be objected that there is no mention in the *Comedy* of the double motion attributed to the fixed stars and planets by the *Timaeus*: nowhere is there even a suggestion that the stars and planets revolve around their own centers (Dante does not mention the rotation of the moon, but his claim of the difference between the two sides of the moon—seen and unseen—implies it). In the *Paradiso* there are a number of instances of the souls of the blessed revolving about their own centers. The clearest case is probably 21.79–81 (and cf. lines 136–38): "Nor had I spoken the last word before the light made of its midst a center, whirling like a swift millwheel." We know, too, from 8.34–35, that the souls met in Venus revolve with a particular order of angels around God, the cosmic center (to be read with Canto 28, especially lines 98–102): "We revolve with the heavenly Principalities—in the same circle, with the same circling and the same thirst." The principle is readily applicable to all the blessed, each level in relation to a particular order of angels. Another important passage is 24.10–18; lines 10–12 seem clearly to indicate that the souls are whirling on their individual axes:

> those happy souls became spheres spinning on fixed poles, flaming, as they turned, like comets

while lines 13–18 indicate that they combine their spinning with differing round dances:

> And as the wheels in the mechanism of a clock turn so that, to one who watches, the first seems to be motionless and the last to fly:

so those carols, differently dancing, allowed me to judge their richness, being fast and slow.

These passages seem to offer some support for Freccero's view of 33.143–45, though they are perhaps not conclusive; on the other hand, it does not seem to us that it can be definitively excluded. In our view, the concluding lines of the poem are intentionally left ambiguous by Dante. As he says in line 142, the previous precision of his imaginings has ceased, and, according to 33.58–63, he can remember only the sweetness left by the vision. We are to understand the pilgrim to be completely integrated affectively into harmony with God and with the cosmos. It is a deeply satisfying conclusion to the poem, and the further questions are there to tease the reader out of thought.

R.M.D.

10. The Neoplatonic Background

The term Neoplatonism refers in the first instance to the philosophy of Plotinus (AD 204–70) and in the second to the countless pagan, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian thinkers influenced in turn—directly or indirectly—by Plotinus's thought (including, among Christians, virtually every patristic and medieval thinker of any importance). The distinction between Neoplatonism and other forms of Platonism (especially "Middle Platonism"—the term covering the period between Plato's immediate successors—the Old Academy—and Plotinus) can be hard to draw, particularly when it concerns widely shared doctrines. In addition to the pagan sources (the most widely read being Porphyry, Proclus, Macrobius, Martianus Capella, and Servius the Grammarian), one may distinguish at least three currents of Neoplatonic thought influencing Dante's period, all deriving ultimately from Plotinus, although influenced as well by Middle Platonism: the Latin current (including both Augustine and Boethius), the Greek current (mainly deriving from Proclus and the Pseudo-Dionysius), and the Arab current.

Plotinus postulated the emanation (the term refers to a flowing forth or radiation) of all things from the utterly transcendent, absolute One, beyond all essence or knowledge (and about which only negative statements can be made). This emanation resulted in three successive levels of being: absolute Mind (*noûs*), which contains the principles or essences of all possible things—the Platonic Ideas—by knowing them; Soul (*psychḗ*), a development of Plato's World Soul, capable of producing and animating bodies in space; and material things. Each successive principle adheres in love to the one just above it—Mind to the One, Soul to Mind—and radiates its own influence downward.

Plotinus created a powerfully original simplification and systematizing of what in Plato was often confused or inconsistent, always insisting that he was merely the master's faithful interpreter. In cosmology the important text by Plato was the *Timaeus*, which fit readily into Plotinus's scheme asserting one spherical cosmos governed by planetary deities. For Plotinus the human soul is divine and immortal, participating in the nature of Soul, happy in the direct contemplation of Mind until falling of its own accord into bodily existence, from whose bondage it can gradually free itself by the ascetic discipline of philosophy, which leads it eventually to "enter the sanctuary" of mystical contemplation of the divine (here the most important Platonic texts were the *Phaedo*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Republic*). From late antiquity on, however, the *Timaeus* was the only one of Plato's dialogues to circulate at all widely in the Latin West (in the incomplete translation and commentary by Calcidius), and Plotinus was directly known only in part; a critical understanding of Plato's own thought did not begin until the fifteenth century.

Plato's interest in elaborate myths as vehicles of philosophical ideas (such as the myths of the Cave—*Republic* 7, or the chariot of the soul—*Phaedrus*) helps account for the Neoplatonists' intense development of allegorical approaches to literary and philosophical texts. They were particularly drawn to the heuristic of microcosm-macrocosm correspondences; Porphyry, for instance, read the description of the Cave of the Nymphs in *Odyssey* 13 as a symbolic representation of the cosmos; Proclus applied the principle to the relation of part to whole in texts. The notion of man as microcosm, central to Plato's *Timaeus*, gained great currency through the Neoplatonists' adaptations.

Plotinus's Neoplatonism was itself heir to "Middle Platonism," whose most influential representatives included Cicero, Apuleius, and Philo of Alexandria. In the Old Testament, the Book of Wisdom, and in the New Testament, the Epistles of saint Paul (d. ca. 65) and the Gospel of saint John (d. ca. 90) show the influence of Middle-Platonic ideas. Plotinus was possibly a fellow student of Ammonius Saccas in Alexandria with Origen, one of the greatest Platonic Christian theologians, and may have been influenced by him and other Christians. As Christianity spread among Greek-speaking intellectuals, its theology acquired an increasingly Platonic character. The emphasis in the Gospel of saint John on the divinity of the Word [*lógos*], "through [whom] all things were made," led inevitably to an adaptation of the Platonic theory of ideas that identified the second person of the Trinity with the Logos, the bearer of the ideas or essences of all things. Influenced by Plotinus's conception of Mind, made coequal by the Christians with God the Father, this identification of the Logos with the second Person of the Trinity was shared by virtually all patristic and medieval Christian thinkers.

Other philosophical issues entered Christian thought via the Platonic/Neoplatonic tradition. The question of the preexistence of the soul was seriously debated by both Origen and Augustine; both left the question open, though they argued strongly that the union of soul and body was a good, and not the result of any fall (least of all the Fall of Man). Other Neoplatonic Christians, like Gregory of Nyssa and Eriugena, regarded the physical body and the division of mankind into sexes negatively, as the proleptic result of the Fall, but the central tradition fought that view.

A major influence on all later Christian thinkers, including Dante, was the fifth- or sixth-century Pseudo-Dionysius (so called because his works circulated under the name of the Athenian judge converted by saint Paul in Acts 17.34, an attribution that lent them almost apostolic authority; they were actually written under the influence of the last great pagan Neoplatonist, Proclus [411–85]). Though strongly creationist, the Pseudo-Dionysius followed Origen and Proclus in making central to his thought the Procession of all things from God as a kind of radiation of light; their Return to him was of course through the mediation of Christ. This pattern also governed the literary structure of his *On the Divine Names* by determining the order and emphasis with which the various names of God (Being, Good, Life, Light, and so forth) are treated (Ivánka 1940). The Pseudo-Dionysius's works also strongly influenced the twelfth-century studies in optics and "light metaphysics," to which the new Gothic style of architecture owed so much; his influence is really incalculable; even the supposedly Aristotelian Aquinas patterned his great *Summa theologiae* on the Procession of the creatures from God and their Return to him; he cited the Pseudo-Dionysius some 1,600 times (for the emerging, more nuanced view of Aquinas's debt to Neoplatonism, see S. Gilson forthcoming).

Arab thought developed Neoplatonism to new levels of complexity, especially in the work of Alfarabi (d. 950), Avicenna (980–1037), and Averroës (1126–98), though Averroës consciously attempted to eliminate the Neoplatonic element in his interpretation of Aristotle. Avicenna's Plotinian-Proclan synthesis attributed the existence of the world to a radiation of the One into the successively lower hypostases and secondary causes in such a way that God was excluded from the direct fashioning of anything other than first (i.e., formless) matter; man's body and soul were left to the fashioning of the Intelligences (angels) governing the heavenly spheres. Avicenna's system became known in the West at about the same time as the influential *Liber de causis*, which for a long time was attributed to Aristotle, but is in fact, as Aquinas eventually realized, an Arabic epitome of Proclus's *Elements of Theology* (curiously, Aquinas never realized that the Pseudo-Dionysius derived from Proclus; he continued to attribute apostolic authority to him); together

with Averroës's version of Aristotle, which assigned an equally important role to the Intelligences, they occasioned much discussion. Arab and Western interest in astrology was considerably strengthened by the Arab philosophical tradition, which seemed to provide it with a scientific foundation.

One of the chief issues was the status of human intellection: according to the more radical Arab positions, intellection was possible exclusively through an illuminating angelic Intelligence and was thus unconnected with the individual human mind or personality (Averroës correctly understood the similar grounds on which Aristotle had denied the immortality of the soul, the "form," or actualizing principle of the body). Thinkers like Albert the Great, Aquinas, and Duns Scotus appealed to the Augustinian and Pseudo-Dionysian, strongly creationist, versions of Neoplatonism, against the emanationist theories of Proclus and Avicenna. They asserted the unity of the individual soul as including intellect.

Medieval European cosmology and metaphysics, both in their Augustinian and their more rationalistic versions, privileged the Platonic/Aristotelian categories of form and matter as keys to the basic structure of the universe. Within the basic consensus on the fundamental importance of celestial influences, there were many differences of detail. The most extreme Neoplatonic position (Witelo), based on the so-called "light metaphysics," held that the light of the heavenly bodies contained the forms that they imposed on sublunar matter; Albert the Great, on most matters a thoroughgoing Neoplatonist, held to the Augustinian conception of created matter as having built-in *incohationes formae* [tendencies to, or beginnings of, form] (a version of Augustine's *rationes seminales*); the most nuanced position was that of Aquinas and his followers, who limited the effect of the heavenly bodies to communicating a *motus ad formam* [motion toward form] to the sublunar (see Litt 1963), with the principle of form itself being regarded as indwelling in sublunar things (a version of Aristotle's concept of entelechy).

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11. Dante and Neoplatonism

Dante was deeply influenced by Neoplatonism as early as the *Vita nova*. In that work his Neoplatonic reading seems to have been restricted to Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* (see *Conv.* 2.13), but both *Convivio* and *Comedy* reflect a much wider acquaintance, including the Pseudo-Dionysius and the *Liber de causis*, which Dante almost certainly read with Albertus Magnus's and Aquinas's commentaries, and Avicenna and Averroës (perhaps via Albertus's *De causis et processu universi*). In his long and complicated development, the effort to assimilate and adapt Neoplatonic ideas is a major thread; he was aware of the

currents just enumerated and took a characteristically independent position on a number of the issues.

Like most other Christians, Dante accepted the Augustinian identification of Plotinus's principle of Mind with the Logos, the second Person of the Trinity. The intuition of the Logos as the principle that contains and creates all things by knowing them is the first level of the pilgrim's vision of the godhead: he first sees a "simple light" revealing the "universal forms" uniting "substances and accidents" (*Par.* 33.85–95). Dante's treatment of the intellectual ascent to God combines the Augustinian theme of human understanding as illumination by God, "the light above the mind" (*Confessions* 7.17), the Pseudo-Dionysius's light mysticism, especially the idea of light—both sensible and intellectual—as the principal unifying factor in creation, and the conflation of logical categories and procedures (especially division, which descends from genera to species to individuals, and collection or classification, which reascends the ladder) with metaphysical ones, common to all forms of Neoplatonism, but which Dante seems to have studied most closely in Boethius.

The problem of deriving the multiplicity of things from the unified—or triunified—light of God's creative power informs all of the cosmological passages in the *Paradiso*, along with the classic Neoplatonic problem of the secondary causes. "Dentro dal cielo de la divina pace / si gira un corpo ne la cui virtute / l'esser di tutto suo contento giace" [Within the heaven of God's peace there turns a body under whose power lies the being of all that it contains] (*Par.* 2.112–14). Referring to the *primum mobile*, this means, quite literally, that it imparts both existence and power to everything within it. Strictly speaking, then, lines 113–14 express an emanationist conception of the relation of the successive heavens that is inconsistent with the idea that the heavens were directly created as formed (see below). It is true that the lines can be taken to mean that, once created, the universe is sustained in existence by this transfer of "being and power" downward through all the spheres; in either case the notion is Neoplatonic. "Lo ciel seguente, c'ha tante vedute, / quell' esser parte per diverse essenze, / da lui distratte e da lui contenute" [The next heaven, which has so many sights, divides that being into different essences, separated by it, yet contained by it] (*Par.* 2.115–17). The sphere of the fixed stars ("tante vedute" [so many sights]) is, then, the first step in the derivation of multiplicity from the "simple light" of God's power. In containing all the multiplicity of the universe virtually, the sphere of the fixed stars follows a pattern similar to that attributed to the Logos, but here there is a material embodiment of the power, which descends through the cosmos from high to low in the mediation characteristic of medieval Neoplatonism: "Li altri giron per varie differenze / le distinzion che dentro da sé hanno / dispongono a lor fini e lor semenze. /

Questi organi del mondo così vanno, /come tu vedi omai, di grado in grado, / che di sù prendono e di sotto fanno" [The other spheres through various differences dispose the distinctions held within them to their ends and to their sowings. These organs of the world thus descend, as you can see, by degrees, for they take from above and fashion below] (*Par.* 2.118–23).

So far Beatrice's account has mentioned only the heavenly spheres and their contents. Now she brings in the angelic Movers of the spheres: "Lo moto e la virtù d'i santi giri, / come dal fabbro l'arte del martello, / da' beati motor convien che spiri; / e 'l ciel cui tanti lumi fanno bello / de la mente profonda che lui volve /prende l'image e fassene suggello" [The motion and the power of the holy spheres must necessarily breathe from the blessed movers, as the art of the hammer does from the smith; and the heaven that so many lights make beautiful takes the image from the profound mind turning it and acts as its seal], *Par*. 2.127–32).

In lines 127–29 the angelic Intelligences direct the motions of the heavens on the model of an artisan using an already formed tool; lines 130–32, however, assert that the heaven of the fixed stars takes form from the mind of its angelic Mover. This may be understood to mean that the form to be imposed below, derived from the mind of the Mover, is conveyed in the light of the fixed stars (cf. *Par*. 22.112–14), but it is very close to the Avicennan or Averroist view in which the spheres and planets take their forms from the Movers. Implied throughout the entire passage is the further idea that each fixed star and planet has a unique formal principle, and that while all light shares a common generic nature, each source of light produces a formally unique species of light (explicit in line 147; cf. *ST* 1a, q. 70 a. 1). Although in lines 127–29 Dante seems to avoid the language used by such thinkers as Witelo who speak of the light of the heavenly bodies containing and carrying down the forms to be imposed on the sublunar, the idea is not far from the surface (cf. also 22.112–13, where the stars of Gemini are called "pregnant with great power").

Unlike many medieval Christians (Boethius, Abelard, William of Conches, to name only a few), Dante did not accept the Platonic and Neoplatonic doctrine of the World Soul, except in a highly attenuated form. For him the nine orders of angels replace the unitary World Soul, but the language in which he writes of them derives from and verges on the Platonic idea of the incarnation of the World Soul (especially in Canto 2, on which see our notes), just as his cosmology is an uneasy combination of Christian creationism and Neoplatonic emanationism.

Beatrice comes close to the Neoplatonic idea of the World Soul in calling the heavens "organs of the world" (2.121), analogous to the organs produced by the human soul to carry out its functions: "E come l'alma dentro a vostra

polve / per differenti membra e conformate / a diverse potenze si risolve, /così l'intelligenza sua bontate / moltiplicata per le stelle spiega, / girando sé sovra sua unitate. / Virtù diverse fa diversa lega / col prezïoso corpo ch'ella avviva, / nel qual, sì come in voi, si lega" [And just as the soul within your dust resolves itself through different members conformed to different faculties, so the Intelligence unfolds its goodness, diversified through the stars, turning itself about its unity. Each different power makes a different alloy with the precious body it vivifies, in which, like life in you, it binds itself] (*Par*. 2.133–41).

The notion that the angels are united with the heavenly spheres they govern, and that the heavens are their "organs" rather than their "instruments" was one of the theses condemned as heretical in 1277 by the archbishop of Paris (Denifle/Chatelain 1889–97, 1:549). Modern critics such as Nardi, Sapegno, and Chiavacci Leonardi seek to minimize the heterodoxy of *Paradiso* 2, but at the very least Dante is skirting dangerous possibilities.

In such passages Dante's struggle to synthesize creationist and emanationist views is evident. *Par*. 29.10–48 sets forth Dante's adaptation—unique to Dante—of the Neoplatonic doctrine of the role in creation of secondary causes, i.e., the angelic Intelligences. The passage is creationist in attributing the creation to God's desire to share the happiness of being with his creatures (lines 13–15; cf. *Timaeus* 29D–30A, *Consolatio* 3.m.9), but it limits God's direct act of creation (apart from Adam and Eve) to "forma e matera, congiunte e purette" [form and matter, both joined and entirely pure] (line 22): i.e., the angels (pure form), first matter (pure matter, pure potentiality without form—what would become, under the shaping influence of the heavens, the earth and all sublunar things), and the heavens (shaped matter: form and matter combined). These three are described as radiating forth simultaneously, on the model of light (lines 25–30), reflecting back to the Creator his own brightness (lines 10–12; cf. *Par*. 1.1–9 and 13.52–66). Based in part on Augustine's interpretation of Gen. 1.1, this conception assigns the entire process of shaping the sublunar to the influence of the heavenly bodies governed by the angelic Intelligences. Except for Adam's and Eve's bodies, which were fashioned directly by God (Gen. 2.7 and 21–22), it applies also to the fashioning of all other human bodies (see also Additional Note 12).

These two cantos on the travelers' stay in the *primum mobile*, the totally undifferentiated outer shell of the universe (see 27.100–127), are sharply set off from those concerning the planets; in the *primum mobile* there are no souls to encounter with their individual histories and characters; matching the nature of the *primum mobile* itself, the pilgrim's vision of God and the angels there consists entirely of uniform rotation around the central point of light, a model of the true nature of the relation of God and the cosmos. Not only are the

cantos sharply set off; along with the introduction into this sphere (27.97–120), Cantos 28 and 29 form a carefully planned unity. We might say that Canto 28 presents the cosmological model as existing and expressing the burning desire of the angels to approach as closely as possible their point of origin, and that in Canto 29 Beatrice explains the cosmogony implied by the model: God's creation of the cosmos as a radiating of his creative power as light. The two cantos are unified both thematically and structurally by their treatment of the Neoplatonic ideas of the procession of all things from God and their turning back and return to him.

This prolonged meditation is one of the sections of the poem that most clearly reveals the profound influence on Dante exercised by two major texts in the Christian Neoplatonic tradition: the great centerpiece to Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, the poem "O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas" (see pp. 686–87), as well as that of the Pseudo-Dionysius's treatise *On the Names of God*. For Dante the pilgrim's vision here is a major turning-point in the journey: the pilgrim's entire education in the nature of the cosmos is reaching its climax, and this vision is an unveiling of a fundamental structure of reality, one that since the beginning of the *Paradiso* Dante has been setting forth insistently: the visible world, though it allows the mind to rise to fundamental intellectual/metaphysical truth, is itself a mere phenomenon, an appearance governed by invisible beings acting according to metaphysical principles that are by no means obvious. The vision sets forth symbolically the true nature of the world: the vision turns the visible world inside out: the fundamental principle of the visible world is *extension* (in space and time; for Augustine's influential discussion of time as *distension*, see *Confessions* 11.14–24), and it is being replaced by *intension*, a principle of concentration; God is not extended, he is intense, a nonspatial, infinite point radiating power, being, knowledge, and love outward. The pilgrim's path through space until now has been outward from the earthly center (its smallness is emphasized in Cantos 22 and 27) into ever larger heavenly spheres, and he has now reached the outer limit/boundary of extension itself: now the journey turns inward toward the true center of things, the infinite intensity of God. The turning inside-out of the pilgrim's world is the explicit focus of the dialogue in Canto 28.

The great Neoplatonic theme of the Return of all things to God, especially that of the human soul, is of course fundamental to *Vita nova* and the *Comedy*, and recurrent in the *Petrose* poems and *Convivio*. Understanding the modes of Procession—the intellectual ascent—is a major aspect of Return. The turning-point of the *Vita nova*, the canzone "Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore," is an elaborate experiment enacting in the details of the

text both of these patterns, as its "division" leads us to discern (see Durling/Martinez 1990).

When beginning his ascent through the spheres, the pilgrim marvels at his "transcending these light bodies" (*Par.* 1.99 ["com'io trascenda questi corpi lievi"]), and Beatrice gives an explanation (lines 103–42) that is overtly Aristotelian insofar as it draws on Aristotle's explanation of the motion of sublunar, elemented things as caused by the tendency of the elements each to return to its proper level (*Physics*, Book 5), the pilgrim's "proper place" being Heaven. But the Aristotelian terminology is put to the service of a conception entirely foreign to Aristotle, who denied the possibility of the separate existence of the soul, as well as its descent from or return to a spiritual realm (the crossing of the Neoplatonic ascent of the soul with Aristotle's terminology goes back to Augustine's *Confessions* 13.9; for the question of the pilgrim's body, see our Introduction, pp. 14–16). As so often in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century texts, the outward clothing of Aristotelian terminology masks the more fundamental allegiance to the Platonic/Neoplatonic tradition.

R.M.D.

12. Dante's Astrology

A. Introduction

In the Middle Ages, the terms astrology and astronomy were virtually synonymous. It was universally agreed that the sublunar world was governed by the heavenly bodies. The only aspect of human nature that was held by Christian thinkers to be exempt from the direct influence of the stars and planets was the intellect (one of the main foundations of this belief was the general acceptance of Aristotle's dictum that no physical organ was identifiable as housing the intellect). The organs of the human body, however, were fashioned in the womb under the influence of the heavens and remained under it day by day. Although the intellect itself was not thought to be bodily, many faculties closely related to it had bodily organs: memory, imagination, judgment, all determining personality, including artistic gifts (they included inventiveness, fertility of association, and other powers). It was well known that bodily ailments could interfere with the functioning of intellect and that general health, as well as body type, was vital to it (for general discussion see Durling/Martinez 1990, Introduction).

All these ideas belonged to the science of the stars, whether called astrology or astronomy. There was, however, sharp disagreement between the mainstream Christian intellectuals and the proponents of judicial or divinatory

astrology with its basic assumption that everything sublunar was determined by the stars. In its extreme form (Ptolemy, the Arab astrologers, on whom see Additional Note 10), this amounted to a thoroughgoing determinism, excluding any possibility of freedom of the will. There was a considerable range of opinion on the extent of the influence of the stars, but the deterministic position was vigorously combated by the Church and its leading intellectuals. But the European professional astrologers (in the thirteenth century including such figures as Michael Scot and Guido Bonatti) were of course prominent on the social scene and prolific as writers, and their kind continued to be consulted by rulers and to have great influence well into the seventeenth century.

B. Dante's early astrological conceptions

Dante's interest in astrology is evident early in his career as a writer, emerging with particular force around the turn of the thirteenth century, particularly in the first three of the so-called *Rime petrose* [stony rhymes], in which the lover's very life is threatened by the configuration of the heavenly bodies (the night sky is dominated by Saturn and Mars, the beneficent planets being below the horizon). A precise, datable horoscope (for December 1296) is implied in the first poem and is treated as an inversion of his natal horoscope, in which the sun in Gemini is identified as the ascendant. Gemini is one of the houses of Mercury, and Dante either knew his actual horoscope or else made one up that was entirely appropriate for a learned poet. The *Petrose* represent a major step forward in Dante's development, one that anticipates the *Comedy*, for Dante treats the lover's problematic relation to the cosmos in poems whose stanza forms are themselves microcosmic imitations of the astrological cycles of nature (see Durling/Martinez 1990; for the importance in the *Comedy* of Dante's natal horoscope, see also Additional Note 14.

In the early years of the fourteenth century, the new exile began a major work, the *Convivio* [Banquet], an introduction to cosmology and philosophy for the unlearned, announced (at the beginning of Book 2) as a commentary on what were to be fourteen of his own canzoni. In this fragmentary work, not published in Dante's lifetime (what comes down to us consists of an introductory book followed by three others, each with a canzone plus elaborate commentary), there are important passages of astrological speculation.

The question of the part played by the secondary causes in the fashioning of human beings preoccupied Dante from the *Petrose* onward. He ultimately accepted the Dominicans' refutations of Averroës' central Aristotelian doctrines of the separateness of intellect and the mortality of the soul, but he rejected Aquinas's theory of the repeated miraculous discontinuities of fetal

development in favor of a theory closer to Albertus Magnus's more naturalistic one (see *Purgatorio* Additional Note 11).

The passage in *Conv*. 4.21 on the production of the human soul documents an important moment in the evolution of Dante's thought, and it reveals very clearly its Neoplatonic origins. The development of the fetus, Dante says, is governed by three factors: the generative power in the seed, derived from the father; the power of the heavens; and the power of the elements assimilated into the fetus to form its complexion. The power of the heavens "produces the living soul" from "the potentiality of the seed." "The [soul] immediately receives from the Mover of the heaven the possible intellect, which brings with it potentially all the universal forms, according as they are in its Producer, and so much the less as [the Producer] is more distant from the first Intelligence." Although not fully spelled out, the idea is clear enough that the various angelic Movers of the spheres are more and less distant from the First Intelligence (whether the Mover of the *primum mobile*, as in *Paradiso* 29, or God himself) according to whether they govern lower or higher planetary heavens. The possible intellect received from the Mover of the sphere of the Moon would be less pure than that received from the Mover of Saturn, and consequently its possessor would have more difficulty in achieving the most abstract understanding.

The roots of this passage in the Avicennan/Averroist version of the emanation of the angels and the heavens and their power over human beings are clear. It is an unusually technical variant of the popular astrological doctrine of the children of the planets (see Hauber 1916), according to which the planet that "rules" a nativity has a preponderant influence on the native, to the extent of determining the occupation(s) to which he or she will be drawn, as well as the temperament, a principle that Dante uses as a fundamental doctrine and chief organizing principle of the entire *Comedy*. *Purg.* 25.37–78, Stazio's account of human embryology, avoids specifying the role of the angelic Intelligence, although the entire process is governed by "nature" (cf. the three "powers" of *Conv.* 4.21) and must be understood in connection with the other passages we have discussed, as well as *Par*. 8.97–148. How far the *Comedy* has moved from the *Convivio* is not entirely clear. (For another important *Convivio* passage, see Additional Note 13.)

C. *Astrology in the Comedy: Inferno and Purgatorio*

There have been very few serious discussions of Dante's astrology, and most of them deal exclusively with the *Comedy*. Palgen 1949 and Kay 1994 are essentially monographic in scope, focusing on passages in the *Paradiso* related to the tradition of astrological manuals deriving from Claudius Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*;

neither raises the general question of the function of such references in relation to the fundamental cosmological poetics of the *Comedy*. Kay has a very useful introduction on the distinction between divinatory astrology and other forms, but in general his work suffers from a presupposition that Dante attributes to the souls encountered in the *Paradiso* the personalities the tradition associates with the "children" of the various planets, including faults; he seems to forget that all of them have passed through Purgatory before reaching Heaven, thus ordering their desires, and at times he contradicts Dante's explicit statements. Nevertheless both Palgen and Kay have demonstrated that Dante knew the traditional manuals well and drew on them extensively (Kay includes a useful "Biobibliography" on the astrological writers who may have been known to Dante, and he is the first to confront seriously the thorny question of Dante's astrological sources). Cornish 2000, with many penetrating observations about the astronomy of the *Paradiso*, does not confront the astrological theme as such.

A more comprehensive approach was undertaken by Georg Rabuse (1958 and a series of articles collected in Rabuse 1976a), who argued that traditional astrology, integrated into a Neoplatonic cosmology based on Macrobius's *Commentarii*, underlies the parallel structures of the three cantiche of the poem. Many of Rabuse's positions, both in detail and in general (particularly the excessive emphasis on Macrobius to the exclusion of other sources), now seem mistaken, but his grand attempt to achieve a comprehensive view (by and large ignored by "mainstream" Dante scholarship) is most suggestive and at times deeply illuminating. It deserves to be known and to stimulate further work. Particularly impressive is Rabuse's exploration of the close interrelation between the cantos in *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* corresponding to the planet Mars.

That there is a parallelism among the three cantiche of the poem has been recognized in a general way by many critics, but none before Rabuse attempted to establish its astrological basis. As Dante makes clear in *Purgatorio* 16, when he also explicitly rejects divinatory astrology, the individual must struggle to establish the freedom of the will from the body and from the influence of the heavens:

> The heavens begin your motions: I do not say
> all of them, but, supposing I say it, a light is given you
> to know good and evil
> and free will, which, if it last out the labor of its first
> battles with the heavens, afterwards overcomes all things,
> if nourished well (lines 73–78; cf. lines 79–81).

These lines clearly imply that giving way to one's temperament as shaped and influenced by the stars and planets can lead to sin and vice. In the *Inferno*, then, we may expect to find the negative reflection of planetary influences, and Rabuse was certainly correct in seeing in the circle of violence (Cantos 12 to 17) the malefic influence of Mars (cf. the explicit reference in 13.143–50). Hell is by definition Babel, or confusion, however, and such matters should not be expected to be simple: there seem to be at least two overlapping systems; it is clear that the trimmers in Canto 3 represent a degree of instability that must be associated with the moon, and that at the other extreme, the treacherous correspond to the planet Saturn, archpatron of traitors, dominant in winter and producing freezings and floodings (as Satan also refers to the mythological Saturn devouring his children). But Saturn, with the moon and Venus, is also a chief influence producing an inclination to lust, particularly associated with air and wind (tumescence was thought to be the result of air pressure—the idea goes back to Aristotle's famous *Problem* 13), and Saturn is unavoidably present in Canto 5. It is clear from *Paradiso* 10 that the heretics (*Inferno* 10–11) correspond to the sun, whose influence they specifically resisted (cf. *Inf.* 10.100–105, with Durling 1981b). It may be that the Noble Castle in *Inferno* 4 reflects a positive influence of the planet Mercury, a chief influence in all arts and sciences, but it is also clear that the Malebolge (Cantos 18–30) correspond to the negative influence of Mercury, patron of thieves and deceivers. There is clearly a break between the cantos of incontinence, where the negative influence of the four elements and four humors in the human body is central, and the circles of deliberate malice; nevertheless the sequence of sins represents a gradual descent into the elements of water and earth (Cantos 6–9), associated with Saturn; the sullen and the angry, in whom fire anticipates its role in lower Hell, seem to represent subforms of the negative influence of Mars.

There is thus a wealth of suggestion to be pursued in further investigation. One must beware of rigid formulae; however, that Dante thought the influence of the planets was discernible in the damned is strongly implied by Marco Lombardo, and, although their wills must have freely chosen to follow the negative side of planetary influence, Dante has clearly worked the theme out in some detail.

While the *Purgatorio* features the seven deadly vices on the seven terraces of its mountain, clearly related, in reverse order, to the cantos of incontinence in the *Inferno*, Purgatory is the realm where the work takes place of correcting whatever negative effects the heavenly bodies have had on the soul. Now out of the body, the penitents are no longer directly influenced by the stars, but the influence of Mars on their temperaments as part of what must be corrected is

clearly involved on the terraces of envy and anger, and on the terrace of anger Dante has Marco Lombardo refute the idea of astrological determinism, being himself a Mars-influenced nature directing his anger against the errors of the superstitious. The cold of earth, moon, and Saturn is explicitly a factor in the three vices avarice, gluttony, and lust in 19.1–6 and the subsequent dream. When we reach Eden and Matelda explains that the pagan myth of the Golden Age (when Saturn, in his good form, ruled on earth—*Purg.* 28.139–44) was a dream of Eden, we are making the transition to the realm of the last cantica, where the influence of the planets on the souls we meet, with the exception of Piccarda and Costanza, will have been entirely beneficial.

The treatment of astrology in the *Paradiso* is discussed in Additional Note 14, for reasons that will become clear.

R.M.D.

13. The Heavens and the Sciences: *Convivio* 2

Convivio 2.12–14 draws an extended analogy between the nine celestial spheres and the seven liberal arts, in the traditional order: first the trivium—moon: grammar, Mercury: dialectic, Venus: rhetoric; then the quadrivium—sun: arithmetic, Mars: music, Jupiter: geometry, Saturn: astronomy; and then the other sciences—fixed stars: physics/metaphysics, *primum mobile*: ethics, and Empyrean: theology. All these Dante calls "sciences," and in each case he finds two points of comparison between the sphere and the corresponding science. In the case of the moon and grammar, for instance, Dante associates the moon spots with the arbitrary (thus ultimately opaque) conventionality of words, and the moon's cycle of phases with unceasing linguistic change, and for each of the heavens he lists what seem to most modern readers to be arbitrary similarities. It is a puzzling, tantalizing passage, most often considered a mere sudden, caprice of Dante's wit, and most scholars do not believe it has any relevance to the *Paradiso* (with the possibly unique exception of Mazzotta 1993). But the passage has much to teach us. And, at least in the case of the moon, connections with the *Paradiso* fairly leap out at one: with the apparent arbitrariness of personal fate (the color of Esau's and Jacob's hair: see 32.61–72, the fact of Piccarda's weakness), with the question of changeability, and so forth.

What exactly is the basis of the analogy? Why does Dante think there is an analogy between the heavens and the sciences at all? I quote the beginning of his discussion:

> I say that by heaven I understand science . . . because of three similarities that the heavens have with the sciences, especially because of the order

> and number in which they manifestly agree. . . . The first similarity is that both revolve around something that is unmoving. For each of the moving heavens turns about its center, which is not moved by that turning; just so, each science moves about its subject, and the subject does not move, since no science demonstrates its own subject but rather presupposes it. The second likeness is that both illuminate. for each heaven illuminates visible things, just as each science illuminates intelligible things. And the third similarity is the inducing of perfection in things properly disposed. As to the first perfection, that of substantial generation, all the philosophers agree that the heavens induce it. . . .[5] In a similar way, the sciences are the cause that induces the second perfection in us, for once we have acquired them as habit we can contemplate truth, according to the Philosopher, when, in the sixth book of the Ethics, he says that truth is the good of the intellect. Because of these similarities, with many others besides, a science may be called a heaven.

The influence of the sciences, then, when they train the mind, inducing the "second perfection" of the habit of science, is exactly parallel to the influence of the heavens as they bring sublunar things into being. In other words, the influence of books on their readers is conceived on the model of the influence of the heavens. This becomes particularly clear when, turning at last to the third heaven of rhetoric and to the first line of his first canzone, "Voi che intendendo il terzo ciel movete" [You who by intellection move the third heaven], Dante explains:

> By the similarities discussed above, one can see who these movers are who move the sphere, such as Boethius [in his *Consolatio*] and Cicero [in his *De amicitia*], who with the sweetness of their speech turned me to the love, that is the study, of this most noble Lady Philosophy, with the rays of their star, which is its written doctrine: for in each science the written doctrine is a star full of light that demonstrates the science.

In other words, the *Consolatio* and the *De amicitia*, moved by their authors—pure intelligences insofar as existing in their works—are like the planet Venus in its sphere, moved by the angelic Intelligences, inducing perfection below by means of its light. To put it in slightly different terms, if a book has the power to influence its readers, it is because this power is conveyed through the light the book radiates into the mind of the reader. Furthermore, as Beatrice teaches the pilgrim at the beginning of their ascent in the *Paradiso*, the differences among the heavenly bodies are due to formal causes—a version of the doctrine,

held also by Aquinas and others, that each heavenly body radiates a unique species of light. So also does each human mind. And at the end of Book 1 of the *Convivio*, Dante explicitly claims that his book will have a similar power (1.13): "This book will be a new light, a new sun that will rise where the other will set, and it will give light to those who are in darkness and shadows because the usual sun does not shine for them." The passionate seriousness of this passage (like the related ones on Henry VII in Epistles 8 and 11)—with the rich organ tones of the echo of Isaiah (the "great light" of Is. 9.2 is itself being interpreted as a sunrise)—is one of the signals of the seriousness with which the extended analogy is advanced.

We still say that books influence their readers, although we do not usually pause to consider that the very term *influence* is derived from the cosmology to which Dante is appealing. Dante's conception goes back at least to Augustine, for whom the Church was a second creation, an analogue of the cosmos; Book 13 of the *Confessions* is devoted to an allegory of the account of the creation in Genesis 1: the Bible corresponds to the firmament, its authority spread above all mankind; the clergy to the heavenly bodies shaping all below; the laity to the sublunar. It is easy to see the relation between Dante's and Augustine's versions of the analogy.

For Dante the idea of celestial influence on the sublunar is the principal conceptual model of created causality as such. And the operation of the heavens on the sublunar is itself an analogue of God's relation to the universe, both his initial act of creation, which in several important passages is described in terms of the instantaneous radiation of light, and his continuous imparting to it of light and energy.[7] If the nature and importance to him of Dante's views on the heavenly bodies is still only partly understood—and I include the question of his opinions about astrology more narrowly conceived—the same must be said for the numerous analogues to the influence of the spheres that fill the *Paradiso*, and which are for the most part, I submit, seriously intended, not mere flights of fancy.

In the *Paradiso* most or all forms of human and social causality are conceived on the model of the influence of the heavens: the power of theologians in the Church and that of saint Francis and saint Dominic (Cantos 10–14); the power of kings and other rulers in society (Cantos 18ff.)—and we should recall Virgil's discussion of Fortune in *Inferno* 7, a version of the same idea: as "earthly splendors," the powerful radiate their influence on their subjects; the conversion of the heathen by saint Benedict; and so on. In each heavenly sphere, the pilgrim undergoes the influence of the representatives, the children, of the planet, who are said to shine their light on him, to pour drink for him (cf. *influere*). At the very beginning of the ascent, when Beatrice corrects the pilgrim's error about

the cause of the spots on the moon, her action is explicitly described as analogous with the operation of the heavenly bodies, specifically the sun (2.106–11). The modern languages have lost the intensity of cosmological and metaphysical significance that Dante attaches to the term *informare*. And Beatrice's mode of proof in *Paradiso* 1, 2, 4, and elsewhere itself imitates the action of causality in the cosmos, descending from first causes downward.

If a book or its writer may occupy a position corresponding to a heavenly body, that is of course also because the processes whereby the heavens shape the sublunar are traditionally conceived as analogous to the activity of human craftsmen. Dante's fullest exposition of this idea is in *Par.* 2.112–48, according to which the Intelligences governing the heavenly spheres take from above the form they impose on the sublunar; the spheres themselves correspond to the hammer of the smith, governed by conscious art. Conversely, the human art that shapes a poem—or any other work of art—is an analogue of the action of the spheres and their Intelligences, and must (1) revolve about the work; (2) shed light on it—the light of the craftsman's own understanding and vision; and (3) induce perfection in it, imparting the luminosity of form—"the newness that lights up [the] form" of the third *petrosa*, as its envoi says—the beauty which, among other things, will give it the power to shape its readers. This principle underlies the poetics of the *Paradiso*, and it can hardly be doubted that Dante hopes his poem will have an effect in the world along the lines of the solar imagery used of saint Francis and saint Dominic.

R.M.D.

14. The *Paradiso* as Alpha and Omega of the *Comedy*

I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.
(Apoc. 22.13)

The *Paradiso* is the Alpha and Omega of the *Comedy* in a variety of ways. Most obviously, the goal of the journey is God, the origin of all things. Heaven is the initial cause of the journey, as we know from *Inferno* 2, and at the midpoint of the *Paradiso* (Cantos 18–20) we learn that the final cause is not merely the salvation of the pilgrim but his providential mission as a poet. Furthermore, the action of the *Paradiso* is the process of the pilgrim's coming to understand the causes that produced and govern the universe, including the destinies of peoples and individuals: the *Paradiso* provides explanations of all we have seen earlier in the poem: it systematically presents the return to origins. It is no accident that the rhetorical figure of *hysteron proteron* (naming the last before the first) is so important in the *Paradiso*; indeed, the entire *Comedy*, viewed in this light, can be seen as an enormous instance of *hysteron proteron*: the last

thing we reach is the origin of all; we ascend from the *posterius* to the *prius* (cf. Additional Note 3).

Thematically, the *Paradiso* presents astrological influences as the principal instruments of God's Providence. Almost at the end of the journey, at the very limit of the physical universe, in the *primum mobile* (Cantos 28–29), the pilgrim has his vision of the relation of God and the angels, the rulers of the heavenly spheres, and Beatrice sets forth the most explicit account in the poem of God's creation of the universe. As our notes point out, Dante's account takes a radical position on several major points: (a) sublunar matter was initially entirely without form (the Neoplatonic "first matter"); (b) the formation of sublunar entities (with the exception of the bodies of Adam and Eve) was entirely the work of the astrological influences governed by the angels; (c) astrological causality, operating through the various formally different lights radiated by the heavenly bodies (see the exposition in Canto 2, with our notes), is an analogue, a lower version, of the radiation of God's power that brought the cosmos into existence. (We may note in passing that the account of creation in Canto 28 completes a circle that began in the first canto of the poem: the pilgrim gazes upward in *Inf.* 1.16–18 and 37–40: passages in which the Alpha of the poem recalls the Alpha of the cosmos.) It is immediately apparent that in setting forth the astrological basis of human temperaments, the *Paradiso* provides a perspective on the souls in Hell and Purgatory that is required for the full understanding of Dante's view. But as Carlo Martello explains in Canto 8, the influence of the stars is stronger than heredity, and through it Providence ensures that children are different from their parents, so as to provide the great diversity of native gifts required by organized society, including both the State and the Church. Just as the influence of Mars supplies warlike natures (of which the highest application is fighting for the faith), that of Jupiter provides souls devoted to Justice (of whom the highest are the just kings), and Mercury public servants who assume fully their political responsibilities, the sun and Saturn provide, respectively, theologians who illuminate the faithful as to the true meaning of the faith and contemplatives whose inner life is the model of all spiritual ascent, the true goal of the religious life.

As he mounts higher and higher in the cosmos, the pilgrim encounters higher and higher levels of causality: higher both in power and in universality. In the heaven of the fixed stars, the heaven that first introduces diversity into the previously undifferentiated transmission of God's creative power, the pilgrim meets the Apostles—this is a variant of Augustine's correlation of the firmament with the Bible—and there he also meets Adam. This collocation joins the two origins, the two forms of filiation in human history: the descent or succession of all humanity from Adam, and the

succession from the Apostles of all ecclesiastics—the personnel of the new creation, the sponsors of God's adoption of the converted (Rom. 8.15–17). Just as Adam and Eve were sent out to multiply and fill the world (Gen. 1.28), the Apostles were sent forth to preach to all people, to multiply and fill the earth with the saved (Matt. 28.19); in each case Dante is thinking of radiation into the sublunar receptacle. And of course the poet himself, at the midpoint of the cantica, is sent forth by Cacciaguida into the world to make known, to propagate, his vision.

Naturally, in Dante's vision God's providential governing of the world is contested at each step by what he regards as human resistance to God's will and to the positive influence of the heavenly bodies (8.142–48); and although he has Carlo Martello assert, and the pilgrim agree, that the stars perform their functions perfectly (8.97–108), a higher authority, Thomas Aquinas, qualifies that view, saying (14.67–78) that the astrological influences ("nature") are like an artist who has "the habit of art" (this would refer to the angels) but "a hand that trembles" (this would refer to the stars themselves), and therefore their products are always less than perfect. The condemnations of earthly corruption pepper the entire cantica as far as Canto 30.

Thus in countless ways Dante works out the idea of the *Paradiso* as the thematic Alpha and Omega of the poem. But he also works out this idea on a metapoetic level: the *Paradiso* is also *formally* the Alpha and Omega of the entire poem. The thematic and the metapoetic levels intersect especially in two passages: in Canto 26.124–32 (where Adam explains the contingent nature of human language, a passage that is deeply connected with Dante's choice to write in the vernacular), and when the pilgrim/poet enters his natal sign, Gemini, where he stays from 22.112 to 27.98 and undergoes his examination in the three theological virtues (the basis of his salvation). Relating his arrival, the poet invokes the stars of Gemini, which first appear in Dante's poetry in the first of the *Rime petrose* in language that he is echoing in this passage; see also Additional Note 12:

112 O glorious stars, o light pregnant with great power, from which I acknowledge that all my talent comes, whatever it may be,
115 with you was being born and with you was setting he that is father of every mortal life, when I first felt the Tuscan air,
118 and then, when grace was extended to me to enter the high wheel that turns you, your region was allotted me.
121 To you now my soul devoutly sighs, to acquire power for the difficult pass that draws me to itself.

That the poet states that he owes his entire "ingegno" [talent, including poetic talent] to the stars of Gemini indicates that he considers Mercury to be the "lord" of his natal horoscope (Gemini, named as the ascendant, is one of the "houses" of Mercury), and that he thinks of his poetic gifts not as residing in his intellect but rather in his body and his sensitive soul with its bodily organs, shaped by the influence of the stars: in his memory, imagination, power of association, linguistic facility, energy, and capacity for prolonged hard work. This is a metapoetic statement of a fundamental cause of Dante's entire output as a writer, and particularly of the *Comedy* (cf. *Inf.* 26.19–24, with note). And it states clearly that Dante thought of astrological influences as operative day by day, and that it somehow lies in the individual's power to increase his receptiveness to them: he has reached a particularly difficult test of his poetic abilities, and to his natal sign his soul "now devoutly sighs, to acquire power." It is a thematic moment entirely coherent with the general view of astrological influences, including their importance to society as governed by divine Providence, presented most explicitly in Canto 8. But it is metapoetic: in Cantos 18–22—within the poem—the poem explains its own origins.

Another important metapoetic aspect of the *Paradiso* is microcosmic. The sensory representations of the *Paradiso* are limited to sights and sounds; there are no experiences of smell, taste, or touch. Not only are sight and hearing traditionally the two highest senses, the least bound to the body and the least material, and thus the most susceptible to supernal influences; they are also located entirely in the head. As we have already repeatedly observed, the ascent through the cosmos takes place within the pilgrim's head; central to Dante's treatment of the celestial ascent is the traditional idea that the human head itself is an analogue of the heavens. According to Plato's *Timaeus*, the rest of the body is a mere supplement to the essential head, dictated by mere physical necessity. Like the cosmos, the head is a sphere that houses the two revolutions of the soul, those of the Same and of the Other, which it shares with the World Soul, and its happiness requires the patterning of its internal life on the serene, unchanging harmony visible in the heavens, the expression in the body of the world of the perfect happiness of its soul.

Dante's account of the imaginative ascent through the heavenly spheres draws on these ideas: the soul participates in the life of the cosmos, revolving with the heavenly spheres, and as it rises to the contemplation of higher and higher principles of causality, it approaches perfect assimilation to the two motions of the Soul. Like the angels, who circle the godhead in ecstatic contemplation and transmit downward God's creative power and the intentions of his Providence, so the pilgrim's vision culminates in the intuition, though he cannot remember it, of the principle of the union of the divine and the

human natures of Christ, after which vision ceases and his affective state remains an ultimate version of the reconciliation of the motions of the Same and the Other within the self (for the interpretation of the concluding lines of the poem, see Additional Note 9).

This level of microcosmic thought/imagery illuminates what has preceded it in *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*. Through the first two cantiche, the parallels with the human body are insistent (see *Inferno* Additional Notes 2 and 13, *Purgatorio Inter cantica* to Canto 28). The Old Man of Crete (*Inferno* 14) is symbolic both diachronically (representing the history of mankind) and synchronically (representing the predicament of fallen humanity, still possessed of intellect almost equal to that of the angels—thus golden—but in the rest of its nature split and conflicted). The parallel with the structure of Purgatory is also important: its ascent represents the healing of the split in our nature and the regaining of Eden at the summit, the true Golden Age, parallel with the unharmed golden head of the Old Man (prefigured also by the hemisphere of light in the Limbo of Canto 4). If God's creative power penetrates the universe and is administered by the angels governing the heavenly bodies, the human head controls and governs the rest of the body by a process that is analogous to the governing influence of the heavenly bodies on the sublunar. This entire system of analogy becomes fully articulated only in the *Paradiso*; it has long been recognized that the *Comedy* is a little model of the universe, but it has not been adequately recognized that it is also a model of the human body, ascending through its powers and processes and in the *Paradiso* finally reaching the sovereign head.

Finally, the *Paradiso* is also the chronological Alpha and Omega of the *Comedy* itself: Dante must have begun planning with it, and it must have been the cantica that received the final touches. As we observed in the Introduction, Dante could not have progressed very far in the composition of either of the preceding cantiche without first developing a fairly detailed outline of the *Paradiso*. That the poem would end with the ultimate Alpha and Omega must have been decided very early, and if the pilgrim was to ascend in imagination up through the heavenly spheres, their order and the themes associated with them would have to have been considered very early. That the arrival in the sun would be a major turning point, preceded by the theme of the shadow of earth (perceptible as a governing category in the first nine cantos of the two earlier cantiche—deepening in the *Inferno*, gradually lifting in the *Purgatorio*) must also have been decided very early. The sun undergoes darkening in *Inferno* 10, and in *Purgatorio* 10–12 meditation on the examples of pride and humility, revealed in God's art and in the light of the sun, leads to crucial illuminations.

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TEXTUAL VARIANTS

I list here, with brief comments, passages where I have adopted readings rejected by Petrocchi, as well as a few others of particular interest. Changes in punctuation, where they do not affect the sense, are not included.

1.48. Petrocchi gives *aguglia*, which though it is attested by more manuscripts, seems much less expressive than the Latin form, with its strong accent on the first syllable.

11.72. The manuscripts are divided between *salse* [climbed] and *pianse* [wept]. With Petrocchi we adopt the latter as richer in meaning and inclusive of the former: in order to weep with Christ on the Cross, Poverty would already have mounted it with him.

13.18. Petrocchi, unlike most modern editors, adopts the reading *al primo*; we adopt the reading *al prima* because it is clearly adverbial, like the common medieval use of *prius*, especially in the phrase *prius et posterius* and its variants. See Additional Note 3.

17.42. Petrocchi has *torrente*, which denotes a current either too small or too violent for the context.

19.63. Petrocchi gives *èli* [it has it]; we follow the more emphatic reading, meaning "it is [indeed] there."

21.130. The sense requires indication of the elision of *(l)i*, the direct object, *li moderni pastori* [the modern shepherds] being the grammatical subject.

24.81. Petrocchi gives *non lì avria*, which gives too much emphasis to the "there" of the phrase.

27.100. Many of the best manuscripts give "vicissim," which Lanza interprets as a Latinism meaning "uniform" (we find this term in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* attested solely as an adverb, which does not fit the context). Chiavacci Leonardi and others adopt "vicinissime"[nearest], introducing an antithesis with "eccelse" [highest], which produces a hypermetric line with the

later "et," which they remedy by deleting the *t* of the later "et"; this, however has the disdvantage of producing the elision of three successive vowels (not Dante's practice). In this case we do follow Petrocchi, who adopts the reading *vivissime*, which makes good sense although it sacrifices the correlation between the distant and the nearer parts of the *primum mobile* introduced by the previous emendation but perhaps not intended.

29.4. We accept Chiavacci Leonardi's arguments in favor of Vandelli's reading.

31.20. As Chiavacci Leonardi points out, *moltitudine* (adopted by Petrocchi), is not at all equivalent to *plenitudine*; see our note on the passage.

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